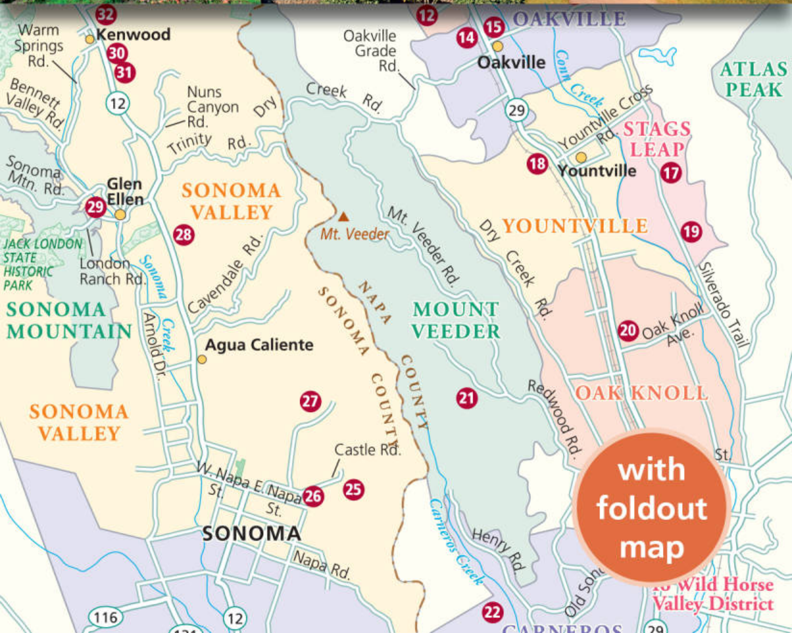
Frommer's

Napa & Sonoma

day BY day

30 Smart Ways to See Wine Country


32
Warm Springs Rd.
Kenwood
30
31
Bennett Valley Rd.
12
Nuns Canyon Rd.
Trinity Rd.
Dry
Creek Rd.
Oakville Grade Rd.
12
14
15
OAKVILLE
Oakville
Conn Creek
ATLAS PEAK
29
Yountville Cross Rd.
STAGS LEAP
18
Yountville
17
Sonoma Mtn. Rd.
Glen Ellen
29
SONOMA VALLEY
28
Mt. Veeder
Mt. Veeder Rd.
Dry Creek Rd.
YOUNTVILLE
19
JACK LONDON STATE HISTORIC PARK
London Ranch Rd.
Sonoma Creek
Cavendale Rd.
SONOMA COUNTY
NAPA COUNTY
Silverado Trail
SONOMA MOUNTAIN
Arnold Dr.
MOUNT VEEDER
20
Oak Knoll Ave.
Agua Caliente
21
Redwood Rd.
OAK KNOLL
SONOMA VALLEY
27
Castle Rd.
St.
W. Napa St.
E. Napa St.
26
25
SONOMA
Carneros Creek
Henry Rd.
Napa Rd.
Old Sonoma
Wild Horse Valley District
116
12
22
29

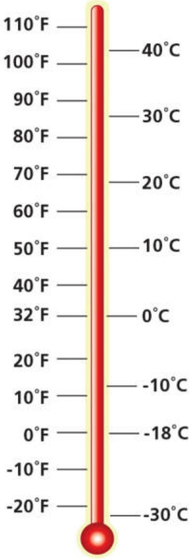
with foldout map

VISIT…

LANZAROTE
Caliente.com

METRIC CONVERSIONS

TEMPERATURE



To convert F to C:
subtract 32 and multiply by 5/9 (.555)

To convert C to F:
multiply by 1.8 and add 32

32°F = 0°C

LIQUID VOLUME

To convert	*multiply by*
U.S. gallons to liters	*3.8*
Liters to U.S. gallons	*.26*
U.S. gallons to imperial gallons	*.83*
Imperial gallons to U.S. gallons	*1.20*
Imperial gallons to liters	*4.55*
Liters to imperial gallons	*.22*

1 liter = .26 U.S. gallon
1 U.S. gallon = 3.8 liters

DISTANCE

To convert	*multiply by*
Inches to centimeters	*2.54*
Centimeters to inches	*.39*
Feet to meters	*.30*
Meters to feet	*3.28*
Yards to meters	*.91*
Meters to yards	*1.09*
Miles to kilometers	*1.61*
Kilometers to miles	*.62*

1 ft. = .30m
1m = 3.3 ft.
1 mile = 1.6km
1km = .62 mile

WEIGHT

To convert	*multiply by*
Ounces to grams	*28.35*
Grams to ounces	*.035*
Pounds to kilograms	*.45*
Kilograms to pounds	*2.20*

1 ounce = 28 grams
1 pound = .4555 kilogram
1 gram = .04 ounce
1 kilogram = 2.2 pounds

Frommer's®

Napa & Sonoma day BY day®

3rd Edition

by Avital Andrews

WILEY
John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Sonoma Valley
MUSCARDINI
ST FRANCIS
MAYO FAMILY WINERY
BENZIGER
TY CATON
LEDSON
KUNDE
WELLINGTON
LANDMARK
Audelssa
ARROWOOD
B.R. COHN WINERY
IMAGERY ESTATE WINERY
Chateau St. Jean
KENWOOD VINEYARDS

Contents

18 Favorite Moments 1

1 Strategies for Seeing Napa & Sonoma 5
Napa & Sonoma 6

2 The Best Full-Day Tours 9
The Best of Napa in One Day 10
The Best of Sonoma in One Day 14
The Best of Napa & Sonoma in Three Days—Day 3 18
The Best of Napa & Sonoma in Five Days—Days 4 & 5 22
The Best of Napa & Sonoma in One Week—Days 6 & 7 26

3 The Best Special-Interest Tours 31
Wine Country for Foodies 32
Wine Country with Kids 36
Wine Country for First-Timers 40
Wine Country for Nondrinkers 42
Wine Country for History Buffs 46
A Day for Arts Aficionados 50
Wine Country for Health & Wellness 54
Wine Country for Romance 56
Wine Country Without a Car 60
Wine Country on a Budget 64

4 The Most Charming Towns 67
Napa 68
Where to Dine 72
Sonoma 74
Where to Dine 77
St. Helena 78
Where to Dine 80
Healdsburg 82
Where to Dine 86
Guerneville 88
Where to Dine 89
Yountville 90

Where to Dine 92
Glen Ellen 94
Where to Dine 96
Petaluma 98
Where to Dine 101
Calistoga 102
Where to Dine 105

5 The Great Outdoors 107
Napa by Bike 108
The Best Wine Country Hike 110
From the Russian River to the Pacific Coast 112

6 Napa & Sonoma Lodging 115
Napa Lodging A to Z 118
Sonoma Lodging A to Z 126

7 The Best Wineries 131
Wineries A to Z 134

8 San Francisco 163
The Best of San Francisco in One Day 164
The Best of San Francisco in Two Days 168
The Best of San Francisco in Three Days 172
Lodging A to Z 178
Dining A to Z 181
Shopping A to Z 188
Nightlife & Arts A to Z 191

The Savvy Traveler 195
Before You Go 196
Getting There 199
Getting Around 200
Fast Facts 202
Wine Country: A Brief History 207
A Quick Guide to Wine Varietals 209

Index 212

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A Note from the Editorial Director

Organizing your time. That's what this guide is all about.

Other guides give you long lists of things to see and do and then expect you to fit the pieces together. The Day by Day guides are different. These guides tell you the best of everything, and then they show you how to see it in the smartest, most time-efficient way. Our authors have designed detailed itineraries organized by time, neighborhood, or special interest. And each tour comes with a bulleted map that takes you from stop to stop.

Hoping to taste the latest Cabernet straight from the barrel at a family-owned boutique winery, learn about the winemaking process on a vineyard tour, or visit the *Peanuts* gang with your kids at the Charles Schultz Museum? Planning a walk through downtown Sonoma, or dinner and a bottle where you can rub shoulders with winemakers and other Napa and Sonoma locals? Whatever your interest or schedule, the Day by Days give you the smartest routes to follow. Not only do we take you to the top attractions, hotels, and restaurants, but we also help you access those special moments that locals get to experience—those "finds" that turn tourists into travelers.

The Day by Days are also your top choice if you're looking for one complete guide for all your travel needs. The best hotels and restaurants for every budget, the greatest shopping values, the wildest nightlife—it's all here.

Why should you trust our judgment? Because our authors personally visit each place they write about. They're an independent lot who say what they think and would never include places they wouldn't recommend to their best friends. They're also open to suggestions from readers. If you'd like to contact them, please send your comments our way at feedback@frommers.com, and we'll pass them on.

Enjoy your Day by Day guide—the most helpful travel companion you can buy. And have the trip of a lifetime.

Warm regards,

Kelly Regan

Kelly Regan, Editorial Director
Frommer's Travel Guides

About the Author

Avital Andrews writes for a range of magazines and newspapers (including the *Los Angeles Times,* where she was an editor) about travel, the environment, and most anything humans do. She is a regular guest on radio shows and is the lifestyle editor of *Sierra,* where she spearheads the magazine's annual "Coolest Schools" issue, which ranks and reports on America's greenest colleges. A California native to the core, Avital has degrees from UCLA and Stanford and lives, works, and trains for marathons in San Francisco. Follow her on Twitter at @avitalb or visit her website, www.avitalandrews.com.

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An Additional Note

Travel information can change quickly and unexpectedly, and we strongly advise you to confirm important details locally before traveling, including information on visas, health and safety, traffic and transport, accommodation, shopping and eating out. We also encourage you to stay alert while traveling and to remain aware of your surroundings. Avoid civil disturbances, and keep a close eye on cameras, purses, wallets and other valuables.

While we have endeavored to ensure that the information contained within this guide is accurate and up-to-date at the time of publication, we make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this work and specifically disclaim all warranties, including without limitation warranties of fitness for a particular purpose. We accept no responsibility or liability for any inaccuracy or errors or omissions, or for any inconvenience, loss, damage, costs or expenses of any nature whatsoever incurred or suffered by anyone as a result of any advice or information contained in this guide.

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Star Ratings, Icons & Abbreviations

Every hotel, restaurant, and attraction listing in this guide has been ranked for quality, value, service, amenities, and special features using a **star-rating system.** Hotels, restaurants, attractions, shopping, and nightlife are rated on a scale of zero stars (recommended) to three stars (exceptional). In addition to the star-rating system, we also use a **kids** **icon** to point out the best bets for families. Within each tour, we recommend cafes, bars, or restaurants where you can take a break. Each of these stops appears in a shaded box marked with a coffee-cup-shaped bullet ☕.

The following **abbreviations** are used for credit cards:

AE	American Express	DISC	Discover	V	Visa
DC	Diners Club	MC	MasterCard		

Frommers.com

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- Online updates of our most popular guidebooks
- Vacation sweepstakes and contest giveaways
- Newsletters highlighting the hottest travel trends
- Online travel message boards with featured travel discussions

A Note on Prices

In the "Take a Break" and "Best Bets" sections of this book, we have used a system of dollar signs to show a range of costs for 1 night in a hotel (the price of a double-occupancy room) or the cost of an entree at a restaurant. Use the following table to decipher the dollar signs:

Cost	Hotels	Restaurants
$	under $150	under $10
$$	$150–$250	$10–$20
$$$	$250–$350	$20–$30
$$$$	$350–$450	$30–$40
$$$$$	over $450	over $40

An Invitation to the Reader

In researching this book, we discovered many wonderful places—hotels, restaurants, shops, and more. We're sure you'll find others. Please tell us about them, so we can share the information with your fellow travelers in upcoming editions. If you were disappointed with a recommendation, we'd love to know that, too. Please write to:

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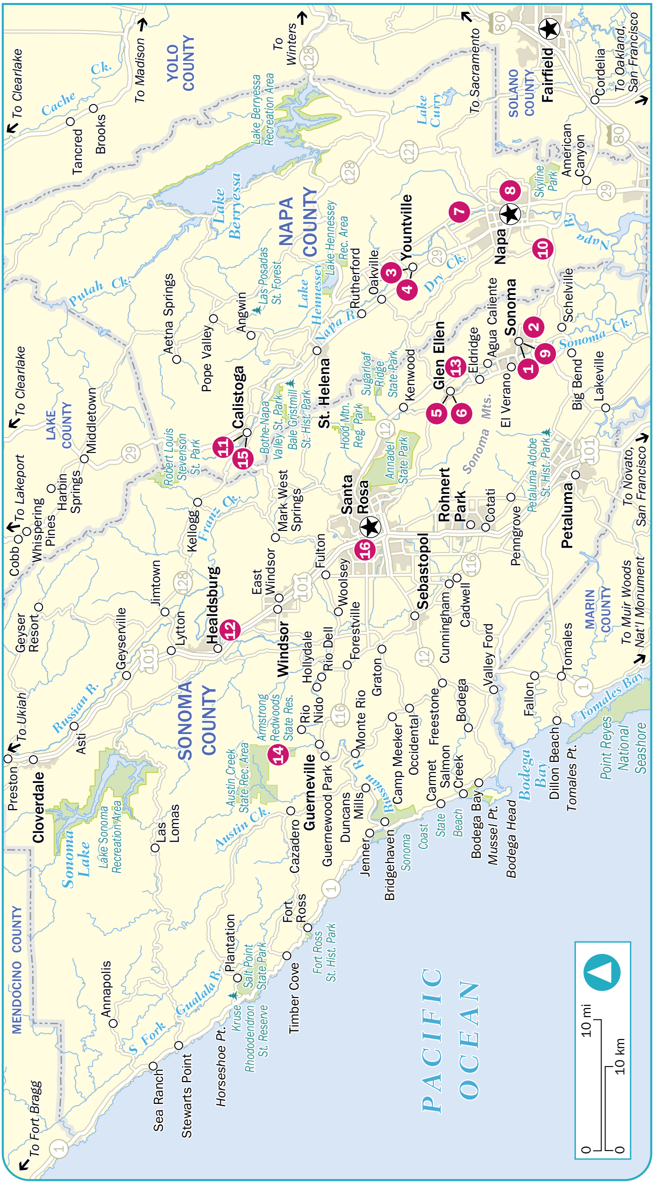
18 Favorite Moments

18 Favorite **Moments**


To Fort Bragg
Sea Ranch
Stewarts Point
Horseshoe Pt.
Annapolis
S. Fork
Gualala R.
Kruse Rhododendron St. Reserve
Salt Point State Park
Plantation
Timber Cove
Fort Ross
Fort Ross St. Hist. Park
MENDOCINO COUNTY
Sonoma Lake
Lake Sonoma Recreation Area
Las Lomas
Cazadero
Austin Ck.
Austin Creek State Rec. Area
Guerneville
Guernewood Park
Duncans Mills
Jenner
Bridgehaven
Sonoma Coast State Beach
Russian R.
Camp Meeker
Occidental
Monte Rio
Rio Nido
Armstrong Redwoods State Res.
Carmet
Salmon Creek
Bodega Bay
Mussel Pt.
Bodega Head
Bodega Bay
Dillon Beach
Tomales Pt.
Point Reyes National Seashore
Tomales Bay
PACIFIC OCEAN
Preston
Cloverdale
To Ukiah
Asti
Russian R.
SONOMA COUNTY
Geyserville
Geyser Resort
Lytton
Healdsburg
Jimtown
Windsor
East Windsor
Hollydale
Rio Dell
Forestville
Woolsey
Fulton
Graton
Freestone
Bodega
Valley Ford
Fallon
Tomales
Cunningham
Cadwell
Sebastopol
Santa Rosa
Mark West Springs
Kellogg
Franz Ck.
Cobb
Whispering Pines
To Lakeport
Harbin Springs
Middletown
LAKE COUNTY
To Clearlake
Robert Louis Stevenson St. Park
Calistoga
Bothe-Napa Valley St. Park
Bale Grist Mill St. Hist. Park
St. Helena
Hood Mtn. Reg. Park
Annadel State Park
Rohnert Park
Cotati
Penngrove
Petaluma
Petaluma Adobe St. Hist. Park
Sonoma Mts.
Kenwood
Sugarloaf Ridge State Park
Glen Ellen
Eldridge
Agua Caliente
El Verano
Sonoma
Big Bend
Lakeville
Sonoma Ck.
Schellville
To Novato, San Francisco
MARIN COUNTY
To Muir Woods Nat'l Monument
Aetna Springs
Pope Valley
Angwin
Las Posadas St. Forest
Lake Hennessey
Lake Hennessey Rec. Area
Napa R.
Rutherford
Oakville
Yountville
Dry Ck.
NAPA COUNTY
Napa
Napa R.
American Canyon
Skyline Park
Putah Ck.
Lake Berryessa
Lake Berryessa Recreation Area
To Winters
To Madison
YOLO COUNTY
Tancred
Brooks
Cache Ck.
To Clearlake
Lake Curry
To Sacramento
SOLANO COUNTY
Fairfield
Cordelia
To Oakland, San Francisco
1
12
16
29
80
101
116
121
128
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
0
10 mi
0
10 km

Previous page: Take in the gorgeous vineyards of the Silverado Trail, including Stags Leap.

① **Relive the Bear Flag Revolt and other significant parts of California history** while wandering Sonoma's town square. Mission San Francisco Solano, General Vallejo's home, and the Sonoma Barracks bring it all to life. ***See p 74.***

② **Take a romantic tandem-bike tour of Sonoma's wineries,** then enjoy an intimate lunch for two at Gundlach Bunschu's hillside picnic grounds. ***See p 57.***

③ **Savor the small dishes** on the tasting menu at one of Yountville's renowned restaurants, like Thomas Keller's French Laundry, hailed by many as America's best restaurant. ***See p 92.***

④ **Try to identify the 35 vintners** in the John Michael Keating painting at the Napa Valley Museum's permanent exhibit, *California Wine: The Science of an Art.* (Can you point out Robert Mondavi, Joseph Phelps, or Louis P. Martini?) ***See p 48.***

⑤ **Ride the tractor tram at Benziger Family Winery** through the hills while learning about biodynamic winemaking. Your tour ("the most comprehensive tour in the wine industry," according to *Wine Spectator*) winds through estate vineyards, into caves, and ends with a memorable tasting. ***See p 15.***

Score a picnic table at Gundlach Bundschu Winery in Sonoma.

Calistoga has its own Old Faithful.

⑥ **Gasp at the beauty of spring wildflowers** bursting forth from Audubon Canyon Ranch's well-guarded Bouverie Preserve in Glen Ellen. Don't be surprised if you spot a wild egret or a bobcat.

⑦ **Enjoy an al fresco meal** on the grounds of a Silverado Trail winery. ***See chapter 7.***

⑧ **Lose yourself in a foodie reverie** at Spice Islands Marketplace, the Culinary Institute of America's prolific campus store. ***See p 33.***

⑨ **Embrace local flavor and music** at one of the region's many farmers' markets. They happen almost every day of the week, but the most popular is the Sonoma Plaza Friday Farmers Market. ***See p 21.***

⑩ **Get current on modern art**—while enjoying a breath of fresh air—at Napa's 217-acre (87-hectare) di Rosa Preserve, where local artists' works are sprinkled into expansive meadows. ***See p 52.***

⑪ **Jump back in (anticipated) surprise** at the eruption of Calistoga's famous Old Faithful Geyser. Sure, it happens every half-hour, but when

Grasp the scope of Napa and Sonoma with a bird's-eye view.

was the last time you've seen water this hot shoot 60 feet (18m) high? *See p 38.*

⑫ **Kayak or canoe down the Russian River** on a lazy afternoon, looking for the perfect bank on which to break out your gourmet picnic. *See p 114.*

⑬ **Feel the exhilaration as you drive** an open stretch of country highway like Route 12. Few moving-car views can match those countless rows of vines fanning by.

⑭ **Relish a contemplative moment** in a grove of millennium-old trees at the Armstrong Redwoods State Reserve. *See p 110.*

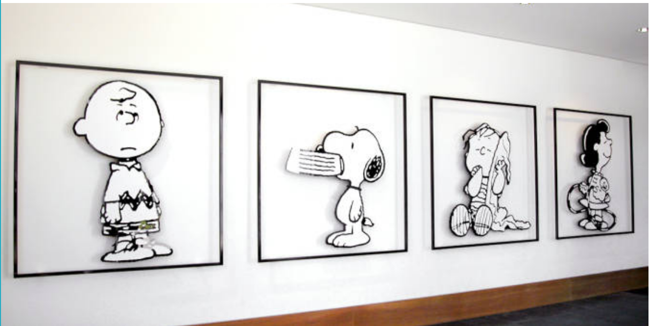
⑮ **Immerse yourself in mineral hot springs** or a soothing mud bath at one of Calistoga's spas. Dr. Wilkinson's Hot Springs Resort in Calistoga is one of the most iconic. *See p 103.*

⑯ **Chuckle at the antics of Lucy, Snoopy, and the rest of the Peanuts gang** during a stroll through Santa Rosa's Charles M. Schulz Museum, which honors the cartoonist's contribution to American culture. *See p 37.*

⑰ **Float aloft** in a spectacularly colored hot-air balloon, serenely surveying miles of vineyards. *See p 60.*

⑱ **Linger at a bustling tasting-room counter,** quietly realizing you've just found the wine you'd like to use to toast your child's wedding. ●

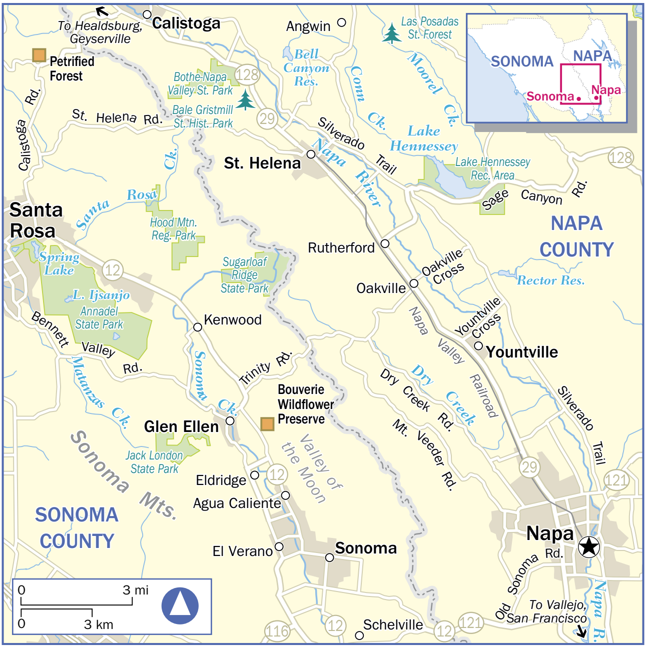
The Peanuts gang is at home at the Charles M. Schulz Museum in Santa Rosa.



1 Strategies for Seeing Napa & Sonoma

MUSCARDINI
7. MILES
ST FRANCIS
MAYO FAMILY WINERY
BENZIGER
TY CATON
7 MI.
LEDSON
MILES
KUNDE
2 MILES
WELLINGTON
LANDMARK
AudeLssa
B.R. COHN WINERY
ARROWOOD
IMAGERY ESTATE WINERY
Chateau St. Jean
4.5 MILES
KENWOOD VINEYARDS
VALLEY OF THE MOON WINERY
MILES
LOXTON
LITTLE VINEYARDS
LARSON
Deerfield Ranch

Napa & Sonoma


To Healdsburg, Geyserville
Calistoga
Angwin
Las Posadas St. Forest
Petrified Forest
Bell Canyon Res.
Bothe-Napa Valley St. Park
128
Conn Ck.
Moore Ck.
SONOMA
NAPA
Sonoma
Napa
Rd.
St. Helena Rd.
Bale Gristmill St. Hist. Park
29
Silverado Trail
Lake Hennessey
Calistoga
Ck.
St. Helena
Napa River
Lake Hennessey Rec. Area
128
Sage Canyon Rd.
Santa Rosa
Santa Rosa
Hood Mtn. Reg. Park
NAPA COUNTY
Rutherford
Spring Lake
12
Sugarloaf Ridge State Park
Oakville Cross
Oakville
Rector Res.
L. Ijsanjo
Annadel State Park
Kenwood
Napa Valley Railroad
Yountville Cross
Bennett Valley Rd.
Yountville
Trinity Rd.
Dry Creek Rd.
Dry Creek
Sonoma Ck.
Bouverie Wildflower Preserve
Silverado Trail
Matanzas Ck.
Glen Ellen
Mt. Veeder Rd.
Sonoma Mts.
Jack London State Park
Valley of the Moon
29
Eldridge
12
121
Agua Caliente
SONOMA COUNTY
Napa
El Verano
Sonoma
Rd.
Old Sonoma
0 3 mi
0 3 km
To Vallejo, San Francisco
Napa R.
116
12
Schelville
12
121

Napa and Sonoma have so much to see and do. That said, the *first* thing you should do is accept that you won't be able to do it all. It's easy to get overwhelmed by all there is to see and experience, but the best way to plan your trip to the two counties is to decide what type of vacation you want and develop a specific itinerary (with room for spontaneity, of course). Use this book to chart your course and choose the special-interest tours that appeal to you.

Rule #1: Decide which valley to focus on: Napa, Sonoma, or equal amounts of both.

Once you know that, decide which parts of each seem to beckon most (perusing this book's "Charming Towns" chapter, p 67, will help). Know that Napa Valley dwarfs Sonoma Valley in population, number of wineries, and sheer traffic. It's the more commercial region, boasting big names (Mondavi, Beringer, Krug) and quite an intimidating selection of restaurants, hotels, and spas. Sonoma's catching up quickly, but many people prefer going there because it's lower-key, less snobby, more backcountry—and feels kind of like a Napa for insiders. Small, family-owned wineries are its mainstay, tastings are less expensive (sometimes free), and winemakers themselves are often in the tasting room pouring your flight. Bottom

Previous page: Sonoma signage points the way to wineries.

line: Choose Napa if you want an active touring schedule, Sonoma for a restful, leisurely vacation.

Rule #2: Don't drink and drive.

Those tiny tastes add up. Plenty of taxi and limo companies are more than happy to provide a chauffeur if you've had too much to drink. Otherwise, designate a driver. Or walk.

Rule #3: Hit wineries early in the day.

Most tasting rooms open around 10am and, even on the busiest weekends, remain empty in the morning, leaving staff free to discuss their wares. If you come after noon, expect a packed house (especially if it's high season) and a time-consuming line just to get a wine sample, much less the employees' prolonged attention.

Rule #4: Visit during off season (Nov–May) or midweek.

The region's optimum time, "crush" (the grape harvest) happens from late Aug through mid-Oct, is peak tourist season—and the masses come in droves, especially on weekends. However, if you can only get here on a high-season Saturday and Sunday, there are ways to avoid the cattle drive. One is to skip the big boys and head to the smaller, family-run wineries instead. Even those along the Silverado Trail, which parallels Hwy 29, get significantly less traffic—savvy locals use it as their main thoroughfare during high season. Another option is to stay in Sonoma—the western county gets congested too, but much less so than Napa.

Remember that most wineries are closed on major holidays, and many have restricted off-season hours, so call ahead if there's one you don't want to miss.

It all starts with the grapes. They're harvested in September, when you'll find many area festivals.

Rule #5: Be conscious of tasting fees.

Visitors didn't used to have to pay for sampling, but when Napa became a tourist destination, wineries began collecting. To their credit, it wasn't so much to make a profit as to discourage visitors who, shall we say, prefer quantity over quality. Nowadays, the Napa norm is about $2 to $8 per flight (though it's much higher at certain places), which is often refundable toward a purchase and sometimes includes a souvenir glass. Sonoma's wineries are less likely to charge for tasting.

Rule #6: Buying at the winery doesn't mean you're saving money.

In fact, you'll probably end up spending more at a winery than you would at stores that buy cases in bulk. Exceptions to this strategy are wineries that offer big discounts on cases and those that only sell their wines from their tasting room (that is, they have no distribution). ***Tip:*** If you can ship your wine directly from the winery, you won't have to pay sales tax.

Rule #7: Don't let wine cook in your car.

Buy a cooler and a couple of ice packs, place them in your car's

The rolling vineyards of B.R. Cohn Winery in Glen Ellen, a town in Sonoma County.

trunk, and *voilà!*—your own portable wine cellar.

Wine shipping is an alternative to lugging around all that *vino* you bought, but it can be confusing, since it's limited by regulations that vary by state. Complicating the matter even further, mailing rules also differ from winery to winery. Check the current legal situation as it pertains to your home state before buying. Ask wineries and, if necessary, independent shipping companies, about their wine-transporting policies.

Rule #8: Keep a light attitude.

If you don't yet know everything about wine and it seems that everyone around you does (to an almost silly degree), don't feel bullied by the sometimes-snobby attitude of those who deem themselves worthier simply because they're better versed in what's essentially only a beverage. Wine country is about relaxing, having fun, learning, and taking in the world-class scenery—not feeling intimidated. If you encounter a snoot pouring your taste, move on.

Rule #9: Make time to explore the region's natural splendor.

You can hike through a redwood forest, kayak the Russian River, stroll along the rocky Pacific coastline in Bodega Bay, and so much more. See "18 Favorite Moments" (p 2) and chapter 5, "The Great Outdoors," for ideas.

Rule #10: Get to know the winery.

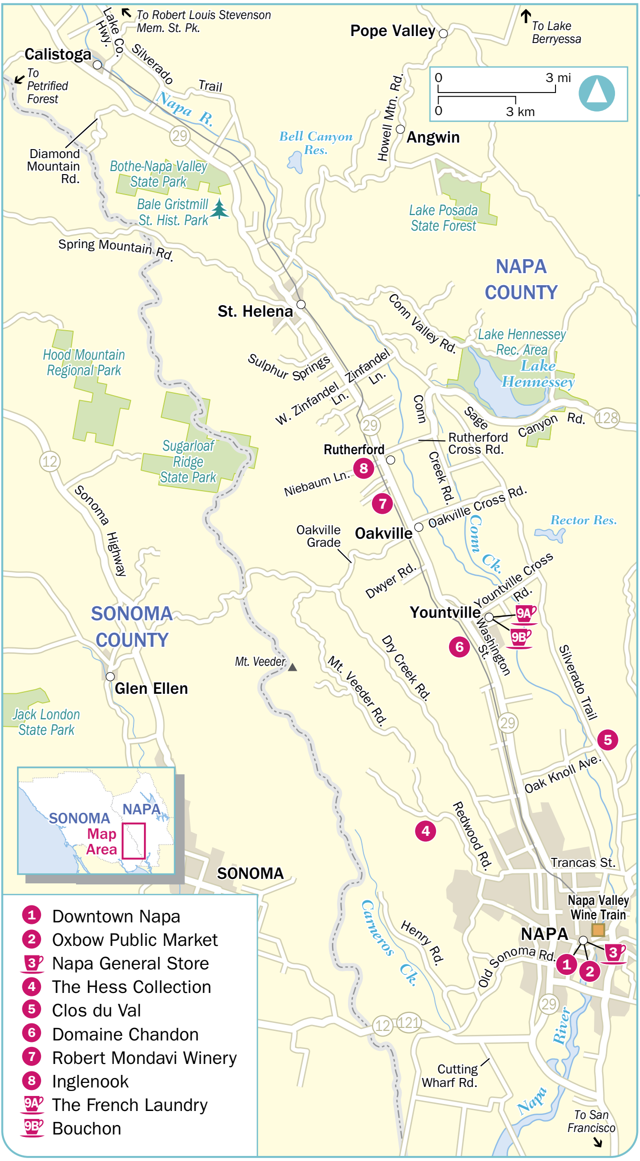
When at a winery, take the time to really get to know not only the wines but also the company's story: its history, its vineyards, and its employees. Most staffers are quite willing to regale you with tales—and if you want more, take a tour. You can drink California wine just about anywhere, but only by visiting a tasting room or touring a winery can you gain true appreciation for the painstaking and artistic processes that go into each bottle. ●

When smelling wine, put your nose deep in the glass and keep your mouth open as you inhale—you'll detect more aromas.

2

The Best Full-Day Tours

The Best of Napa **in One Day**



To Robert Louis Stevenson Mem. St. Pk.
Pope Valley
To Lake Berryessa
Calistoga
Lake Co. Hwy.
Silverado Trail
Napa R.
To Petrified Forest
0 3 mi
0 3 km
Diamond Mountain Rd.
29
Bell Canyon Res.
Howell Mtn. Rd.
Angwin
Bothe-Napa Valley State Park
Bale Gristmill St. Hist. Park
Lake Posada State Forest
Spring Mountain Rd.
NAPA COUNTY
St. Helena
Conn Valley Rd.
Lake Hennessey Rec. Area
Lake Hennessey
Hood Mountain Regional Park
Sulphur Springs
Zinfandel Ln.
W. Zinfandel Ln.
Conn
Sage
Canyon Rd.
128
Sugarloaf Ridge State Park
Rutherford
Rutherford Cross Rd.
12
Niebaum Ln.
Creek Rd.
Oakville Cross Rd.
Sonoma Highway
Rector Res.
Oakville Grade
Oakville
Conn Ck.
Dwyer Rd.
Yountville Cross Rd.
SONOMA COUNTY
Yountville
Washington St.
Mt. Veeder
Mt. Veeder Rd.
Dry Creek Rd.
Silverado Trail
Glen Ellen
Jack London State Park
Oak Knoll Ave.
SONOMA
NAPA
Map Area
Redwood Rd.
Trancas St.
SONOMA
Napa Valley Wine Train
NAPA
Carneros Ck.
Henry Rd.
Old Sonoma Rd.
12
121
River
Cutting Wharf Rd.
Napa
To San Francisco
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9A
9B

1. Downtown Napa
2. Oxbow Public Market
3. Napa General Store
4. The Hess Collection
5. Clos du Val
6. Domaine Chandon
7. Robert Mondavi Winery
8. Inglenook

9A The French Laundry

9B Bouchon

Previous page: Napa's most common grape is cabernet sauvignon (pictured). Sonoma County's most common grape is chardonnay.

All you have is a day to make the most of Napa? That's a tall order because the valley is so rich with worthwhile towns, wineries, sights, and activities, but it can be done—and done well. This full-day itinerary, manageable in a day by car, introduces you to the region's fundamental character. At the end of it, you can rest assured that you've experienced Napa's essence. But remember, drinking-and-driving rules still apply, so designate a driver, don't swallow the wine, or limit your intake and eat heartily. **START: 1st & Main sts. Tour distance: About 36 miles (68km).**

① ★★ **Downtown Napa.** Not long ago, the actual town of Napa would never have been listed in a "best of Napa Valley" tour—but times have changed and the town's recent redevelopment merits it a spot right at the top. Hit Napa Town Center to get a feel for everyday life here. Note the striking Italianate-style Opera House and how upscale this town's markets are. *Napa Tourist Information Center, 1310 Napa Town Center, Napa. ☎ 707/252-1000. www.napatouristinfo.com. Mon–Thurs 10am–4pm; Fri–Sun 10am–5pm.*

② ★ **Oxbow Public Market.** This is a foodie's dream destination, showcasing the region's best comestibles under one roof. Walk through the marketplace to meet vendors selling artisanal cheeses, exotic spices, bottles from microwineries, and an impressive selection of other gourmet goodies. Free parking is available. *610 & 644 First St., Napa. ☎ 707/226-6529. www.oxbowpublicmarket.com. Mon–Sat 9am–7pm; Sun 10am–6pm. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas & New Year's Day.*

3 ★ **Napa General Store.** End your downtown Napa visit at the Historic Napa Mill to pick up a box lunch ($15). Choose from a variety of fresh sandwiches and salads that come with a house-baked cookie and utensils. ***Note:*** Box lunches must be ordered at least a day in advance. If you didn't preorder, get something to go from the market's cafe (options include sandwiches, salads, Asian specialties, and hand-tossed pizzas) or sit down and eat here—a cozy option if the weather's unsavory. *540 Main St., Napa. ☎ 707/259-0762. $$.*

You're officially here! Napa Valley welcomes more than 4.5 million visitors per year.

WELCOME to this world famous wine growing region
NAPA VALLEY
napa valley vintners
...and the wine is bottled poetry...

Take Hwy. 29 north and exit at Trancas St. Turn left on Redwood Rd., a four-lane road that narrows into a two-lane road. Turn left at the Hess Collection's sign.

④ ★★★ **The Hess Collection.** The beautiful drive up provides a good example of the ruggedly beautiful scenery that characterizes much of Northern California. The winery itself offers art galleries, a garden that blooms in summer, and a stone-walled tasting room in the original 1903 winery that features a maple bar, barrel-lined walls, and the true highlight: a full selection of Hess's current releases, including superb cabernet sauvignon and chardonnay. *4411 Redwood Rd., Napa.* ☎ *707/255-1144. See p 150.*

Wind back down Redwood Rd. and stay straight onto Trancas St., then turn left on Silverado Trail.

⑤ ★ **Clos du Val.** You can't say you've done Napa's best without having seen at least one small, exclusive winery in the Stags Leap District along the scenic Silverado Trail. Marked with both French and American flags to communicate that this estate is French-owned, Clos du Val's tasting room is behind the ivy-covered walls. In it, try Ariadne, the winery's proprietary blend of sauvignon blanc and Sémillon. Ask tasting-room staff for a tour of the demonstration vineyard, where you can learn about trellising techniques and how to identify different kinds of grapes. After trying the wines, settle into Clos du Val's beautiful olive grove and break out the food you bought earlier for a picnic lunch. *5330 Silverado Trail, Napa.* ☎ *707/259-2200. See p 143.*

Head southeast on Silverado Trail and turn right at Oak Knoll Ave., then left onto Big Ranch Rd. Turn right to get back onto Oak Knoll Ave., and right again to get on Hwy. 29 N. Exit toward Yountville, then turn left on California Dr. Head up the long, vineyard-flanked driveway.

⑥ ★ **Domaine Chandon.** Cross a small footbridge over a life-filled pond (keep an eye out for egrets) and past some interestingly placed sculptures (including a faux mushroom field) to enter the educational visitor center, complete with a 28-seat large-screen theater, a wall made entirely of bottles, and interactive exhibits. Domaine Chandon specializes in "sparkling wine"—technically, it can't be called champagne because it's not produced in that proprietary French province. But because this winery is owned by the venerable French company Moët et Chandon, what you get is pretty similar. The knowledgeable employees explain the nuances of effervescent wine. *1 California Dr. (at Hwy. 29), Yountville.* ☎ *707/944-2280. See p 146.*

Take California Dr. northeast to merge onto Hwy. 29.

⑦ ★★ **Robert Mondavi Winery.** This mission-style venue gives the

Stop for a refreshing glass of sparkling wine at Domaine Chandon.

Francis Ford Coppola's winery, formerly Niebaum-Coppola then Rubicon Estate, is now known by its historic name, Inglenook.

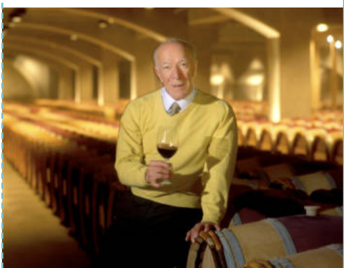
valley's most varied and comprehensive tours. Given today's time constraint, however, opt for the basic tour or simply visit the art gallery before or after tasting in the Appellation Room, an outdoor tasting area that's open in summer. If it's winter, taste in the upscale To Kalon Room. *7801 St. Helena Hwy. (Hwy. 29), Oakville.* ☎ *707/226-1395. See p 158.*

Keep following Hwy. 29 northwest.

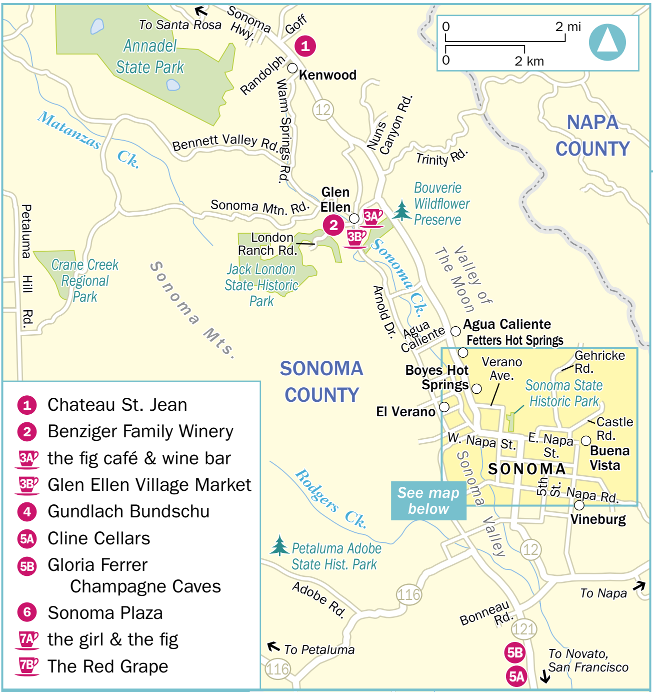
⑧ ★★★ **Inglenook.** Formerly Niebaum-Coppola, then Rubicon Estate, in 2011, Inglenook at last acquired the right to its original historic name. Film director Francis Ford Coppola's ivy-draped 1880s stone winery exudes grandeur. Inside, an impressive retail center promotes Coppola's wine products and, more subtly, his movies. The Centennial Museum chronicles the estate's rich history, as well as Coppola's filmmaking—on display are Academy Awards and memorabilia from ***The Godfather*** and ***Bram Stoker's Dracula.*** Sample the estate-grown blends, cabernet franc, and merlot—all made from organic grapes, but note the caveat: a $25 admission fee. For the price, you'll get a tour and a five-wine tasting flight. *1991 St. Helena Hwy., Rutherford.* ☎ *707/968-1100. See p 151.*

9A ★★★ **The French Laundry.** If you want the ***best*** of Napa dining, there's only one place to go: a very, very famous little restaurant called the French Laundry. Chef Thomas Keller's intricate preparations, often finished tableside, are presented with uncommon artistry. But when the check arrives, close your eyes and reassure yourself that this was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Reservations are required and should be made at least 2 months in advance. *6640 Washington St., Yountville.* ☎ *707/944-2380. $$$$$. See p 93.* If you still have next month's rent to pay, dine at humbler 9B ★★ **Bouchon.** You'll still be eating Keller's inspired creations, but in toned-down bistro environs that are more friendly than froufrou. *6534 Washington St., Yountville.* ☎ *707/944-8037. $$$. See p 92.*

The late Robert Mondavi in his barrel room.

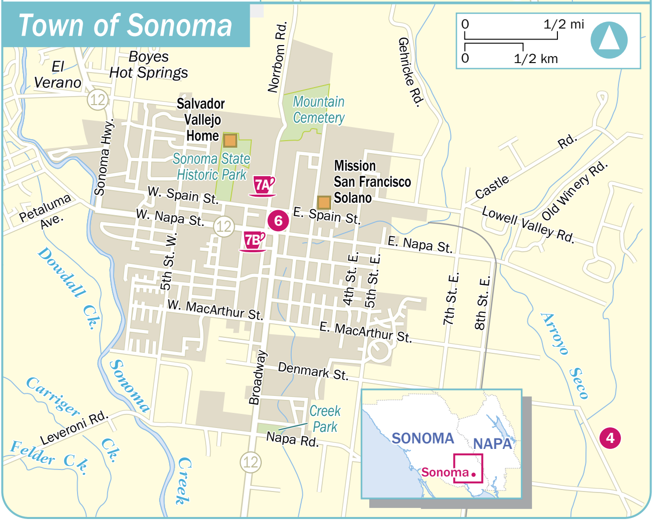


The Best of Sonoma in One Day


To Santa Rosa
Sonoma Hwy.
Goff
Annadel State Park
Randolph
Kenwood
Warm Springs Rd.
12
Nuns Canyon Rd.
Matanzas Ck.
Bennett Valley Rd.
Trinity Rd.
NAPA COUNTY
Bouverie Wildflower Preserve
Sonoma Mtn. Rd.
Glen Ellen
London Ranch Rd.
Jack London State Historic Park
Petaluma Hill Rd.
Crane Creek Regional Park
Sonoma Mts.
Sonoma Ck.
Valley of The Moon
Arnold Dr.
Agua Caliente
Agua Caliente
Fetters Hot Springs
Gehricke Rd.
Verano Ave.
Sonoma State Historic Park
Boyes Hot Springs
SONOMA COUNTY
El Verano
Castle Rd.
W. Napa St.
E. Napa St.
Buena Vista
SONOMA
Sonoma Valley
5th St.
Napa Rd.
Vineburg
Rodgers Ck.
See map below
Petaluma Adobe State Hist. Park
12
116
Adobe Rd.
To Napa
Bonneau Rd.
121
To Petaluma
116
To Novato, San Francisco
0
2 mi
2 km

- ① Chateau St. Jean
- ② Benziger Family Winery
- 3A the fig café & wine bar
- 3B Glen Ellen Village Market
- ④ Gundlach Bundschu
- 5A Cline Cellars
- 5B Gloria Ferrer Champagne Caves
- ⑥ Sonoma Plaza
- 7A the girl & the fig
- 7B The Red Grape

Town of Sonoma


Boyes Hot Springs
El Verano
12
Norrbom Rd.
Gehricke Rd.
Salvador Vallejo Home
Mountain Cemetery
Sonoma Hwy.
Sonoma State Historic Park
Mission San Francisco Solano
7A
Castle Rd.
Old Winery Rd.
W. Spain St.
E. Spain St.
Petaluma Ave.
W. Napa St.
6
7B
Lowell Valley Rd.
E. Napa St.
Dowdall Ck.
5th St. W.
4th St. E.
5th St. E.
7th St. E.
8th St. E.
W. MacArthur St.
E. MacArthur St.
Arroyo Seco
Sonoma Ck.
Broadway
Denmark St.
Carriger Ck.
Creek Park
Leveroni Rd.
Napa Rd.
Felder Ck.
Sonoma Creek
SONOMA
NAPA
Sonoma
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0
1/2 mi
1/2 km

Sonoma Valley is like a younger sibling to Napa Valley. It's made up of the same kind of magic, and one gets the sense that it tries hard to match Napa's renown. The struggle to measure up has paid off, to the degree that many visitors profess that Sonoma has actually surpassed Napa in charm—and wine. This 1-day overview gives you a taste of the wineries, lets you experience the small-town feel, and takes you along bucolic stretches of highway. **START: Chateau St. Jean, 8555 Sonoma Hwy. (Hwy. 12), Kenwood. Trip Length: 26 miles (42km).**

① ★★ **Chateau St. Jean.** Notable for its grand buildings and expansive grounds, Chateau St. Jean is, in California, a pioneer in vineyard designation—the procedure of making wine from, and naming it for, a single vineyard. A private drive takes you to a well-manicured picnic lawn overlooking meticulously maintained vineyards. In the large tasting room, where there are plenty of housewares for sale, sample Chateau St. Jean's wide array of wines, including chardonnay, cabernet sauvignon, Johannisberg Riesling, and gewürztraminer. *Sideways* notwithstanding, merlot is the winery's bestseller. *8555 Sonoma Hwy. (Hwy. 12), Kenwood.* ☎ *707/833-4134. See p 142.*

Continue southeast on Hwy. 12, turn right onto Arnold Dr., then make a slight right onto London Ranch Rd.

② ★★ **kids** **Benziger Family Winery.** This is a true family estate. At any given time, two generations of Benzigers may be present, and they make you feel like part of the clan. The property is known for its excellent 45-minute tractor-tram tour ($15), which winds through the vineyards while providing a thorough explanation of why it's a certified biodynamic winery, and what that means. The tram stops often so that you can see exhibits and walk into aromatic, aging caves, and the tour ends with an informative tasting. ***Tip:*** Tram tickets—a hot item in summer—are available on a first-come, first-served basis. If the next tram ride is full, while away the time tasting wine, then take the next tour available. *1883 London Ranch Rd., Glen Ellen.* ☎ *888/490-2739. See p 138.*

The barrel room at Benziger is built into the hills and naturally maintains an ideal temperature.

3 ★★ the fig café & wine bar. Call ahead to place a to-go order at this beloved Glen Ellen cafe, whose big-sister restaurant is Sonoma's famous girl & the fig (p 77). Restaurateur Sondra Bernstein's inspired lunch creations include pizzas, tarts, salads, and sandwiches. Pick up your meal and save it for the picnic grounds at the next stop. *13690 Arnold Dr., Glen Ellen.* ☎ *707/938-2130. $$.* Alternatively, grab something from the deli counter at **4 ★ Glen Ellen Village Market,** where recommended options include panini, burgers, and burritos. *13751 Arnold Dr., Glen Ellen. 707/996-6728. $.*

From Glen Ellen, take Arnold Dr. south (toward Holt), then turn left onto Leveroni Rd. Two miles (3.2km) after Leveroni, it becomes Napa Rd. Make a left onto Denmark St. You'll quickly see:

⑤ ★★ Gundlach Bundschu. If it looks like the people working here are enjoying themselves, that's because they are. Gundlach Bundschu is the quintessential Sonoma winery—nonchalant in appearance but obsessed with the craft. Members of this winemaking family are known for their mischievousness: They've pulled stunts like holding up Napa's Wine Train (p 63) on horseback and serving Sonoma wines to their "captives." The small, often crowded tasting room plays rock music as carefree—but attentive—staffers happily pour chardonnay, pinot noir, merlot, cabernet, and others. Now in its sixth generation, this is California's oldest continually family-owned and operated winery. This is the place to unfold your lunch feast: GB's picnic area is perched on the side of a small hill, giving it a sensational view of the Sonoma countryside. Work up an appetite by taking the short hike to the top of the knoll. *2000 Denmark St., Sonoma.* ☎ *707/938-5277. See p 150.*

Choose between visiting Gloria Ferrer or Cline, which are almost adjacent. Travel less than 2 miles (3.2km) north on Hwy. 121 and pull into either:

6A ★ kids Cline Cellars. If you're more interested in California history and tasting an array of unique wines, opt for this family-owned winery with a small, friendly tasting room and an intimate museum that showcases dollhouse-size dioramas of all 21 California missions. *24737 Arnold Dr. (Hwy. 121), Sonoma.* ☎ *707/940-4000. See p 143.*

OR:

6B Gloria Ferrer Champagne Caves. If you've had it up to here with chardonnays and pinots—or if you're just a big fan of champagne—choose Gloria Ferrer, which specializes in sparkling wine (pictured). It's a bit overrated as a tourist attraction—to see the eponymous caves, you merely stand at a railing and flip on a light switch, then wonder to yourself, "That's *it*?" But the bubbly's good, so come expecting just that, and you won't be disappointed. Also note that the tasting room only offers wine by the glass (not flights), so it's not the best choice if you want to try a variety. *23555 Arnold Dr. (Hwy. 121), Sonoma.* ☎ *707/996-7256. www.gloriaferrer.com. Daily 10am–5pm. Guided underground cave*

GLORIA FERRER
BLANC DE BLANCS

tours (free) daily noon, 2 & 4pm. Tastings $2–$10. See p 149.

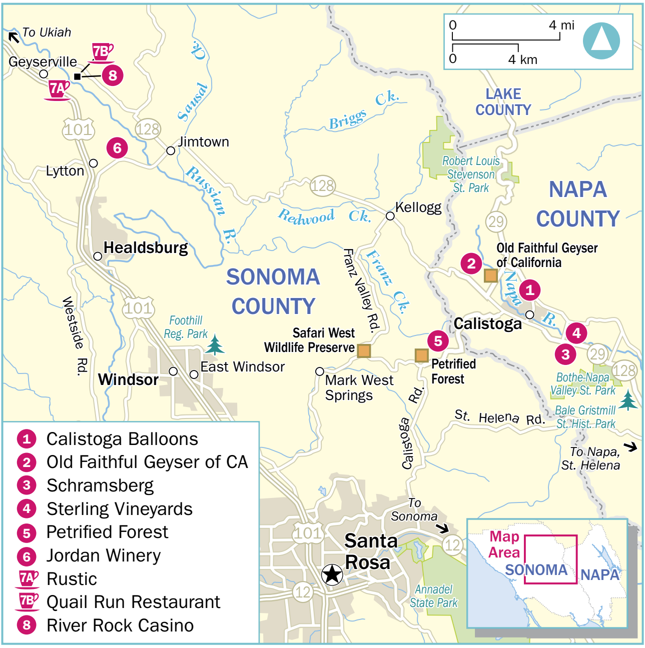
Continue northwest on Hwy. 121/Carneros Hwy./Arnold Dr., then turn right onto W. Watmaugh Rd. After about a mile (1.6km), turn left onto Broadway and stay on it until it ends on Napa St. Turn left or right and look for parking.

⑦ ★★★ **kids** **Sonoma Plaza.** The eight-acre (3.25-hectare) site of the 1846 Bear Flag Revolt is the pulse point of the entire county, and it hums with history and local culture. Despite the tense confrontation it commemorates, the plaza (California's oldest) is relaxing, with a parklike atmosphere that promotes cheeriness. Well-preserved historic monuments—like the fascinating Mission San Francisco de Solano, City Hall, General Vallejo's home, and old army barracks—add mystique. You'll be hard-pressed not to leave the plaza lugging shopping bags, because the boutiques, bakeries, tasting rooms, and galleries are irresistible. If your evening stroll is on a Tuesday in spring or summer, you'll catch the farmers' market and its accompanying musical acts. (For more on farmers' markets, see p 21.) *Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau, 453 1st St. E.* ☎ *707/996-1090. www.sonomavalley.com. Mon–Sat 9am–5pm; Sun 10am–5pm.*

The town of Sonoma.

8A ★★★ **the girl & the fig.** For dinner, go with this local favorite right on the plaza. From its refusal to use uppercase letters to its insistence on using figs in many of its recipes, this warmly decorated eatery serving inventive nouveau French cuisine makes sure to defy convention, which works to its benefit. Sit outside if the weather's pleasant—and save room for dessert. *110 W. Spain St. (in the Sonoma Hotel), Sonoma.* ☎ *707/938-3634. www.thegirlandthefig.com. $$. See p 77.* If you're in the mood for great pizza, try **8B** ★ **kids** **The Red Grape,** a casual, artsy space a half-block off the plaza. Its unconventional selection of crispy thin-crust pies made with fresh local ingredients in wood-stone ovens gratifies even the snobbiest of pizza connoisseurs. *529 1st St. W., Sonoma.* ☎ *707/996-4103. www.theredgrape.com. $$.*

The Best of Napa & Sonoma in Three Days—Day 3


To Ukiah
Geyserville
Lytton
Jimtown
Healdsburg
Windsor
East Windsor
Westside Rd.
Sausal Ck.
Russian R.
Briggs Ck.
Redwood Ck.
Franz Valley Rd.
Franz Ck.
Kellogg
Robert Louis Stevenson St. Park
LAKE COUNTY
NAPA COUNTY
SONOMA COUNTY
Old Faithful Geyser of California
Napa R.
Calistoga
Foothill Reg. Park
Safari West Wildlife Preserve
Mark West Springs
Petrified Forest
Calistoga Rd.
St. Helena Rd.
Bothe-Napa Valley St. Park
Bale Gristmill St. Hist. Park
To Napa, St. Helena
To Sonoma
Santa Rosa
Annadel State Park
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Map Area
SONOMA
NAPA
1 Calistoga Balloons
2 Old Faithful Geyser of CA
3 Schramsberg
4 Sterling Vineyards
5 Petrified Forest
6 Jordan Winery
7A Rustic
7B Quail Run Restaurant
8 River Rock Casino

Follow the previous two itineraries for your first couple of days. On the third day, this full-day up-valley Napa and Sonoma tour shows you the natural lay of the land from above (think balloons and aerial trams), below (from whence the geyser spews), and through. ***Tip:*** Plan ahead—advance reservations are required for ballooning and Jordan Winery. Also, know that ballooning requires getting up at around 5am. **START: Your hotel. Distance: 50 miles (81km), not including transport to, from, and during the hot-air balloon ride, or the drive from your hotel to Old Faithful.**

① ★★★ **kids** **Calistoga Balloons.** If you've been in wine country this long, you've seen the colorful hot-air balloons floating above the vineyards. Sure, it means getting up at an ungodly hour—but once aloft, you'll know what sanctity means. Your expert pilot maneuvers the balloon into the clouds, creating a sublime experience. A full champagne breakfast is served upon landing, in keeping with balloonist tradition. Reservations are required and should be made as far in advance as possible. *1250 Lincoln Ave., Railcar #15, Calistoga.* ☎ *707/942-5758. www.calistogaballoons.com. About*

$239 per person, including transportation ($219 without brunch). See p 61. Another good company providing rides is ★★★ kids **Napa Valley Aloft** ☎ *707/944-4408. www.nvaloft.com. $229 per person, including transportation from hotels in Yountville to the launch site (an additional $15 charge applies from Napa, Rutherford, and Oakville). See p 60.*

Ballooning Tip

When the valley's foggy, companies drive passengers outside the valley to launch. Though they can't guarantee the flight path until hours before liftoff, they should refund your money if you decide not to partake.

Calistoga Balloons will deliver you back to your hotel. From there, drive to:

② ★★ kids **Old Faithful Geyser of California.** At this natural wonder (it's one of only three "old faithful" geysers in the world) surrounded by pleasant kitsch, you can dependably see 60-foot-high (18m) eruptions every 40 minutes. If you want, buy treats at the snack bar to munch on between spews. Or linger at the gift shop, where you can watch a video about the Golden State, get a penny stamped to remind you of your visit, or buy California-themed mugs, key chains, and wine glasses. *1299 Tubbs Lane, Calistoga.* ☎ *707/942-6463. See p 38.*

Take Tubbs Lane southwest and turn left on Foothill Blvd./Hwy. 128. Turn right on Peterson Dr., then right on Schramsberg Rd.

③ ★★ **Schramsberg.** This 200-acre (80-hectare) estate has a wonderful old-world feel—in his heyday, Robert Louis Stevenson was a regular. Schramsberg is the label presidents serve when toasting international dignitaries, and there's plenty of memorabilia in the front room to prove it. But the real mystique begins when you enter the 2½-mile (4km) aging caves (reputedly North America's longest), hand-carved by Chinese laborers in the 1800s. The free tour ends in a charming tasting room where you sit around a big table and sample varied selections of bubbly. *1400 Schramsberg Rd., Calistoga.* ☎ *707/942-4558. See p 159.*

Head northeast on Schramsberg Rd. to turn left on Peterson Dr. Turn left on Hwy. 29/128, then right on Dunaweal Lane.

Schramsberg's bountiful wine cave.

④ ★★ **kids** **Sterling Vineyards.** An aerial tram brings you to this dazzlingly white Mediterranean-style winery, perched atop a rocky, 300-foot-high (90m) hill. On your way up, marvel at the view, which spans many of Napa Valley's vineyards. When you land, follow the multimedia self-guided tour (one of wine country's most thorough), which details the winemaking process. This winery churns out more than 500,000 cases per year (read: it's a huge producer) and admission includes a sit-down tasting. *1111 Dunaweal Lane, Calistoga.* ☎ *707/942-3300. See p 160.*

Go south on Dunaweal Lane to turn right onto Hwy. 29/128. Turn left on Petrified Forest Rd.

⑤ ★★ **kids** **Petrified Forest.** Volcanic ash blanketed this area after Mount St. Helena erupted more than 3 million years ago. As a result, the redwoods in this mile-long (1.6km) forest have turned to stone through the slow infiltration of silica and other minerals. If you look closely, you'll also see petrified seashells, clams, and other marine life, indicating that water covered this area before the redwood forest grew. Take the quarter-mile (.4km) walking trail to see a collection of rock logs, the Pit Tree (a preserved pine in a 15-ft./4.5m-deep pit), a statue of Petrified Charlie (Charles Evans, this land's first owner), and other stiffened trees with names like The Giant (a redwood) and The Queen, which has a live oak growing out of it. *4100 Petrified Forest Rd., Calistoga.* ☎ *707/942-6667. See p 37.*

Take Petrified Forest Rd. west and turn right on Porter Creek Rd./Mark West Springs Rd. Merge onto Hwy. 101 N., exit on Lytton Springs Rd., turn right, and then left on Lytton Station Rd., then left on Alexander Valley Rd.

⑥ ★★ **Jordan Winery.** With ivy-covered buildings reminiscent of an18th-century French château and hilltop views of Alexander Valley, Geyser Peak, and Mount St. Helena, Jordan Winery is a must-see in the Healdsburg area. Formal French gardens and a variety of trees (picnic tables are set under a massive oak) add to the experience. Tours of the winemaking facilities happen almost every day and conclude with sips of cab and chardonnay. Reservations required. ***1474 Alexander Valley Rd., Healdsburg.*** ☎ ***800/654-1213. See p 152.***

7A ★★ **Rustic.** Have dinner at Francis Coppola's winery's restaurant, formerly Chateau Souverain's Alexander Valley Grille. The menu lists pizzas, burgers, steaks, salads, seasonal soups, and a four-course tasting menu. On Tuesdays, trust the chef to send your dishes out *a tavola*-style. ***300 Via Archimedes, Geyserville.*** ☎ ***707/857-1485. $$.*** For a more casual experience, head to **7B** **Quail Run Buffet** at the River Rock Casino, which is, well, a pretty typical casino buffet. It's got a full late-night menu too. ***3250 Hwy. 128, Geyserville.*** ☎ ***707/857-2777. $$.***

Bacchus, the Greek god of wine, at Jordan Winery approves of your wine-soaked afternoon.

Local Farmers' Markets

Wine country is alive and colorful with free farmers' markets from Tuesday through Saturday. Here's when to go where:

TUESDAY: The **Napa Downtown Farmers' Market** happens from 7:30am to noon in the Napa Valley Wine Train's parking lot. Rollicking musical performances complement the fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables, baked goods, and coffee. *500 1st St. May–Oct (Tues & Sat).* The **Valley of the Moon Certified Farmers' Market** happens from 5:30pm to dusk; you'll find produce, food samples, flowers, crafts, nonprofit booths, and live entertainment. *Sonoma City Hall, 2 E. Napa St., Sonoma.* ☎ *707/529-0404. May–Oct.*

WEDNESDAY: The energy-filled **Guerneville Farmers' Market** happens on the town square from 4 to 7pm. ☎ *707/865-4171. May–Oct.* **Yountville's Farmers' Market** brings purveyors of organic produce, entertainment, wine tastings, and chef demonstrations from 4:30pm to dusk. *Vintage 1870 parking lot, Washington St.* ☎ *707/257-8481. June–Sept.* **Santa Rosa** holds two Wednesday farmers' markets, one year-round from 8:30am to noon. *Veterans Building's east parking lot (at Maple St. and Hwy. 12).* ☎ *707/522-8629.* The downtown market is open May through August, 5:30 to 8pm. *4th St. (between B and D sts.).* ☎ *707/524-2123.*

THURSDAY: At **Napa's Chef's Market,** farmers join musicians, artists, winemakers, brewers, and chefs for a festive Thursday-night event from 5 to 9pm. *1290 Napa Town Center (at 1st St.).* ☎ *707/257-0322. Mid-May to Aug.*

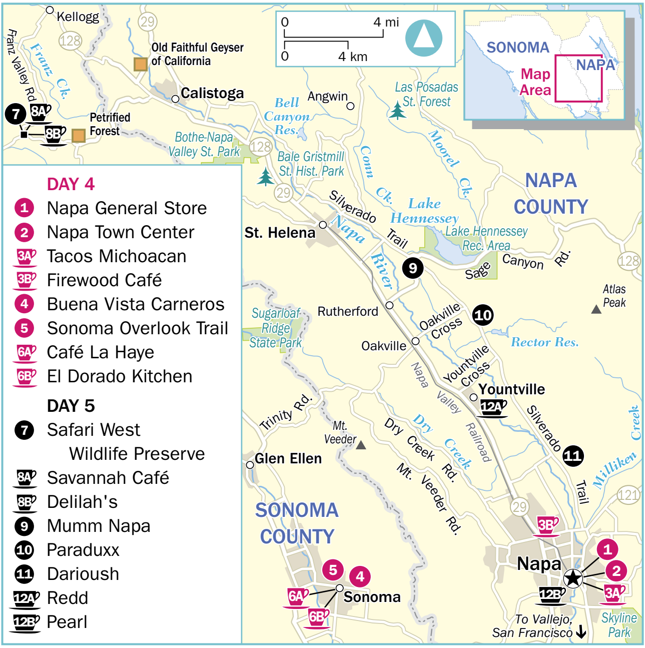
FRIDAY: St. Helena's Farmers' Market at Crane Park (on Crane St., off Hwy. 29) showcases fresh produce, flowers, baked goods, live entertainment, and arts and crafts from 7:30am to noon. ☎ *707/486-2662. May–Oct.* At **Sonoma Farmers Market,** you might spot some of the valley's most prominent chefs eyeing the goods. It's open 9am to noon. *Depot Park (at 1st St. W.).* ☎ *707/538-7023.*

SATURDAY: Calistoga Farmers' Market happens at Old Gliderport from 8:30am to noon. *1546 Lincoln Ave.* ☎ *707/942-0808.* Santa Rosa holds another market in the Veterans Building's east parking lot. *See above for details.* In Healdsburg, from 9am to noon, the town's excellent (but sometimes crowded) farmers' market happens a block west of the Plaza (at North and Vine sts.). ☎ *707/431-1956. May–Nov.*

Head east on Alexander Valley Rd. and turn left on Hwy. 128.

⑧ ★ **River Rock Casino.** Open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, this bungalow-style casino owned by the Dry Creek Band of Pomo Indians stocks more than 1,200 slot machines, a variety of card tables, and frequent live-entertainment acts. Try your luck—but if it runs out, gain perspective on the outside deck overlooking the magnificent hills surrounding Alexander Valley. ***3250 Hwy. 128, Geyserville.*** ☎ ***707/857-2777.***

The Best of Napa & Sonoma in Five Days—Days 4 & 5


DAY 4
1 Napa General Store
2 Napa Town Center
3A Tacos Michoacan
3B Firewood Café
4 Buena Vista Carneros
5 Sonoma Overlook Trail
6A Café La Haye
6B El Dorado Kitchen
DAY 5
7 Safari West Wildlife Preserve
8A Savannah Café
8B Delilah's
9 Mumm Napa
10 Paraduxx
11 Darioush
12A Redd
12B Pearl
0 4 mi
0 4 km
SONOMA
NAPA
Map Area
Kellogg
Franz Valley Rd
Franz Ck.
Old Faithful Geyser of California
Calistoga
Petrified Forest
Bothe-Napa Valley St. Park
Bell Canyon Res.
Angwin
Las Posadas St. Forest
Bale Gristmill St. Hist. Park
Conn Ck.
Moore Ck.
Lake Hennessey
Lake Hennessey Rec. Area
NAPA COUNTY
St. Helena
Silverado Trail
Napa River
Sage Canyon Rd.
Atlas Peak
Sugarloaf Ridge State Park
Rutherford
Oakville
Oakville Cross
Yountville Cross
Rector Res.
Napa Valley Railroad
Yountville
Trinity Rd.
Mt. Veeder
Dry Creek Rd.
Dry Creek
Mt. Veeder Rd.
Glen Ellen
Milliken Creek
SONOMA COUNTY
Napa
Sonoma
To Vallejo, San Francisco
Skyline Park
29
128
121

After conducting your first 3 days as outlined on the preceding pages, days 4 and 5 will serve to solidify your sense of the region, as well as expose you to more of both valleys' distinctive attractions. It's helpful if you spend the night of Day 4 in Sonoma County. Consider staying overnight at Safari West, the starting point of Day 5. (See p 130 for lodging details.) **DAY 4 START: Napa Town Center, 1st & Main St., Napa. Distance: About 50 miles (80km). DAY 5 START: Safari West Wildlife Preserve, 3115 Porter Creek Rd., Santa Rosa. Distance: About 32 miles (52km).**

DAY 4

① ★★★ Napa General Store.

Start your day with a satisfying breakfast at the shop occupying the Historic Napa Mill—the store's homemade granola and chocolate beignets are worth trying. Eat outside for a view of the Napa River, or inside to cozy up near the fireplace. While you're there, sniff the oils and soaps, all hand-crafted by local artisans. *540 Main St., Napa.* ☎ *707/259-0762. $$.*

② ★ **Napa Town Center.** Head to this retail complex to sate a sweet tooth at Anette's Chocolates or to sample the gelato at Christopher's

Start your day alfresco at the Napa General Store.

Fine Foods. Stroll past retailers, including the 50,000-sq.-ft. (4,645-sq.-m) McCaulou's Department Store, known for its selection of affordable clothes. All the vendors are in historic buildings and connected by a pedestrian pathway. Look for the two huge oak trees that serve as town landmarks. Here you'll also find the **Napa Tourist Information Center.** *1310 Napa Town Center.* ☎ *707/252-1000. www.napatouristinfo.com. Mon–Thurs 10am–4pm; Fri–Sun 10am–5pm.* Stop in for local information, coupons, and pamphlets outlining self-guided walking tours of the town's historic buildings. *1290 Napa Town Center.* ☎ *707/255-9282.*

3A **Tacos Michoacan.** Grab a bite at what used to be a well-known Napa taco truck but has since graduated into a sit-down restaurant. *721 Lincoln Ave.* ☎ *707/256-0820. $$.* Craving pizza? Try casual, family-friendly 3B **Firewood Café.** *3824 Bel Aire Plaza.* ☎ *707/224-9660 or www.firewoodcafe.com. $$.*

Your scenic 25-minute drive from Napa Valley to Sonoma Valley starts westward on 1st St., then merges onto Hwy. 29 S. Turn right onto Hwy. 12/121, then make a slight right onto Napa Rd. Turn right on 8th St. E., then right again on E. Napa St. Make a quick left on Old Winery Rd.

4 ★★★ **Buena Vista Carneros.** America's oldest continuously operating winery was founded in 1857 and is worth a visit for its historical relevance alone. A restored stone press houses the tasting room—in it, try what the estate calls the "Carneros Quartet": Its pinot noir, chardonnay, merlot, and cabernet sauvignon—all crafted via artisan methods. *18000 Old Winery Rd., Sonoma.* ☎ *800/926-1266. See p 139.*

Take Old Winery Rd. southwest, then turn right on E. Napa St. Turn right on 1st St. E. Just beyond the Veterans Memorial Building is a small lot adjacent to the Mountain Cemetery entrance. Park, then look for the trail head sign.

5 ★ **Sonoma Overlook Trail.** Take in sweeping afternoon views from this well-maintained trail, an easy 2-mile-plus (3.2km) loop accented by interpretive signage, seasonal wildflowers, and manzanita trees. Not long ago, this hillside was doomed to be developed as a resort, but locals worked with the Sonoma Ecology Center to preserve the scenic area. See if you can see San Pablo Bay and San Francisco's skyline—both should be visible on a clear day. Heartier souls wanting a workout can jog this instead of hiking it. If you're walking, though, allow about 2 hours. ☎ *707/996-0712. www.sonomaecologycenter.org.*

6A ★★ **Café La Haye.** You'll have worked up an appetite, so dine at this petite restaurant offering seasonal cuisine. *140 E. Napa St., Sonoma.* ☎ *707/935-5994. $$.* 6B ★★ **El Dorado Kitchen,** a Mediterranean-inspired bistro, is more upscale. *405 1st St. W., Sonoma.* ☎ *707/996-3030. $$$. See p 77.*

DAY 5

⑦ ★★ **Safari West Wildlife Preserve.** Tours at this 400-acre (160-hectare) home of more than 400 exotic animals—think zebras, giraffes, and gazelles—start at 9 or 10am, depending on the season. Though the organization's primary mission is wildlife preservation and breeding endangered species, it espouses a strong belief that education and in-person contact with animals raises awareness—and care—about the need for conservation. During the preserve's daily Classic Safari Adventures, guides drive you around the savanna-like environs in open-air vehicles from which you'll see wildebeest, oryx, and ostrich, among many other freely roaming species. You'll want to take lots of pictures in the open-air aviary, and of all the lemurs and buffalo within view. If you're into zoology, pay extra ($225 for two people; $50 for each additional adult, $30 for each additional child) for a behind-the-scenes tour and chat with the keepers. Advance reservations are required for all tours, which are about 3 hours long. *3115 Porter Creek Rd., Santa Rosa.* ☎ *707/579-2551 or 800/616-2695. www.safariwest.com. Spring–fall tours daily at 9 and10am, 1 and 4pm; winter tours daily at 10am and 2pm. Safari tours $78, children 3–12 $32 ($15 for age 2 and younger).*

8A ★ **Savannah Café.** Power up before leaving Safari West at its sit-down restaurant. ☎ *800/616-2695. $$$.* Reservations are required—if you haven't made them, and it's summer, grab a bite from 8B **Delilah's,** Safari West's deli, where you can get sandwiches, sides, and wines. ☎ *800/616-2695. $.*

Drive about a half-hour to cross valleys again: Going east on Porter Creek, turn left on Petrified Forest Rd., then right on Hwy. 28. Turn left on Deer Park Rd., then right on Silverado Trail. Once on Silverado, this portion of the tour can be done by either bicycle or car.

⑨ ★★ **Mumm Napa.** This winery in a big redwood barn looks almost humble at first glance. Once through the door, however, you'll understand that Mumm means big business. Just beyond the extensive gift shop

Get up close and personal with Safari West's 700 exotic animals.

Along the bucolic Silverado Trail.

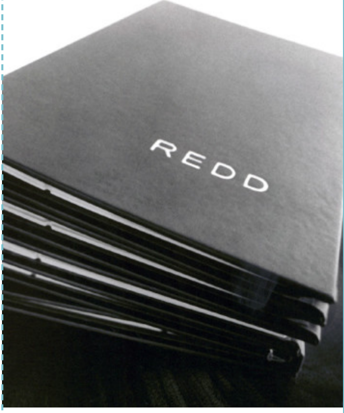
is the tasting room, which serves all manner of sparkling wines. Appreciate vineyard and mountain views from the open patio—and don't miss the permanent Ansel Adams collection, a timeless staple among the winery's ever-changing photography exhibits. ***8445 Silverado Trail, Rutherford.*** ☎ ***707/967-7700. See p 155.***

⑩ ★ **Paraduxx.** Rows of vineyards fan by as you travel farther south on Silverado Trail to reach this chic, airy tasting room. Try flavorful reds served in stemless Riedel alongside small plates of spiced almonds. ***7257 Silverado Trail, Napa.*** ☎ ***707/945-0890. See p 156.***

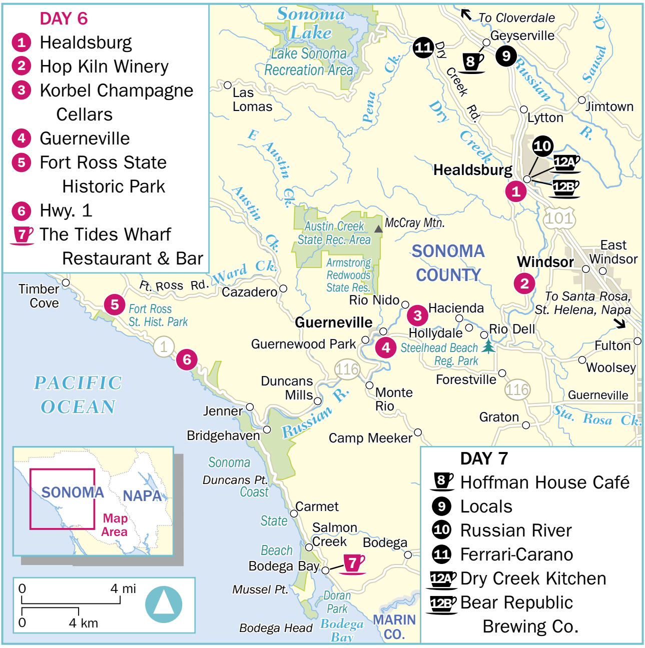
⑪ ★★★ **Darioush.** Even farther south on the Silverado Trail is this winery, distinctive for its Persian-themed architecture. Wines worth trying include shiraz, merlot, cabernet sauvignon, viognier, and chardonnay, all served with pistachios. Opt for the appointment-only private tasting with cheese pairing ($60), to get tastes of local artisan cheeses with your wine, plus a tour of the stunning facilities. ***4240 Silverado Trail, Napa.*** ☎ ***707/257-2345. See p 145.***

12 Ⓐ ★★ **Redd.** For an impeccable dinner, make your way to Richard Reddington's global-inspired Yountville restaurant. His seasonal California creations include signature dishes like butternut-squash ravioli with ragout. ***6480 Washington St., Yountville.*** ☎ ***707/944-2222. $$$. See p 93.*** A less expensive option is Napa's 12 Ⓑ ★ **Pearl,** a treasure of a restaurant with big, creatively fashioned entrees. ***1339 Pearl St., Napa.*** ☎ ***707/224-9161. $$. See p 72.***

Open one of Redd's menus for inspired California cuisine.



The Best of Napa & Sonoma in One Week—Days 6 & 7


DAY 6
1 Healdsburg
2 Hop Kiln Winery
3 Korbel Champagne Cellars
4 Guerneville
5 Fort Ross State Historic Park
6 Hwy. 1
7 The Tides Wharf Restaurant & Bar
DAY 7
8 Hoffman House Café
9 Locals
10 Russian River
11 Ferrari-Carano
12A Dry Creek Kitchen
12B Bear Republic Brewing Co.
Sonoma Lake
Lake Sonoma Recreation Area
To Cloverdale
Geyserville
Las Lomas
Dry Creek Rd.
Dry Creek
Russian R.
Sausal Cr.
Jimtown
Lytton
Pena Ck.
E Austin Ck.
Austin Ck.
Healdsburg
101
Austin Creek State Rec. Area
McCray Mtn.
SONOMA COUNTY
Windsor
East Windsor
Armstrong Redwoods State Res.
Ward Ck.
Timber Cove
Ft. Ross Rd.
Cazadero
Rio Nido
Hacienda
Fort Ross St. Hist. Park
Guerneville
Hollydale
Rio Dell
To Santa Rosa, St. Helena, Napa
Guernewood Park
Steelhead Beach Reg. Park
Fulton
1
116
Woolsey
Forestville
PACIFIC OCEAN
Duncans Mills
Monte Rio
Guerneville
Jenner
Graton
Bridgehaven
Camp Meeker
Sta. Rosa Ck.
Sonoma Duncans Pt. Coast
Carmet
State
Salmon Creek
Beach
Bodega
Bodega Bay
Mussel Pt.
Doran Park
Bodega Head
Bodega Bay
MARIN CO.
SONOMA
NAPA
Map Area
0 4 mi
0 4 km

If you've followed these daily tours until now, you've gotten a good sense for lower Sonoma. An extra 2 days gives you the luxury of being able to fully explore northeastern Sonoma, which you got a peek of at the end of Day 3. This itinerary expands on the 5-day tour to include posh Healdsburg, quirky Guerneville, and the majestic scenery that typifies much of California (frankly, it'd be a crime to be this close to the Pacific and ignore the rocky coast edging Hwy. 1). You'll also learn more about California history at Fort Ross and taste wines from the Dry Creek and Russian River Valley appellations. ***Tip:*** If you're staying in the area for a week or more, consider renting a vacation home instead of staying at a hotel. Consult chapter 6 for ideas, or check sites like www.airbnb.com and www.riverhomes.com. **DAY 6 START: Plaza St. & Healdsburg Ave., Healdsburg. Distance: About 62 miles (100km). DAY 7 START: Hoffman House Café, 21712 Geyserville Ave., Geyserville. Distance: About 21 miles (34km), not including kayaking and shuttling.**

La Crema is one of many tasting rooms that line Healdsburg Plaza.

DAY 6

① ★★★ **Healdsburg.** This up-and-coming town gets much of the credit for putting northern Sonoma on the tourist map. Until recently, it didn't even produce a blip on travelers' radar, but it's now a huge draw for those seeking true refinement in Sonoma. You'll find a plethora of tasting rooms (a few of the best are **La Crema, Toad Hollow,** and **Kendall Jackson**), excellent restaurants, both modern and country accommodations, unique shops and galleries—and a modest small-town vibe. You can learn about the town's history at the **Healdsburg Museum.** Before leaving, patronize **Flying Goat Coffee** and grab a picnic at **Oakville Grocery.** *See p 82 for a detailed walking tour.*

Head south on Healdsburg Ave. to turn right on Mill St. Stay straight to go onto Westside Rd.

② ★ **Hop Kiln Winery.** Get your first taste of the Russian River Valley appellation at this California Historical Landmark. As its commemorative plaque says, this 1905 structure "represents the finest existing example of its type, consisting of three stone kilns for drying hops, a wooden cooler, and a two-story press for bailing hops for shipment." Indeed, this is a superb example of a stone hop kiln. In the rustic tasting room, sample zinfandel, chardonnay, and gewürztraminer. Also onsite: a duck pond and the Old Fig Garden, both perfect for picnics. *6050 Westside Rd., Healdsburg.* ☎ *707/433-6491. See p 151.*

Head southwest on Westside Rd. When you get to River Rd., make a slight right.

③ ★★ **Korbel Champagne Cellars.** Korbel, too, is within the Russian River Valley appellation, but

It's tough to tire of the views along wine country's sunny, lazily winding roads.

it has been specializing in bubbly since 1882. The winery's colorful rose garden and free tastings make for a delightful visit. If you're getting hungry for lunch, a tasty sandwich from the gourmet deli should fill you up. *13250 River Rd., Guerneville.* ☎ *707/824-7000. See p 153.*

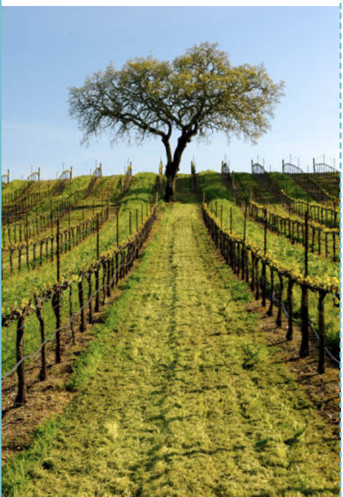
Take the short but beautiful drive southwest on River Rd., which becomes Main St.

④ ★★ **Guerneville.** This off-the-beaten-path village is perfect for a walking tour (p 88). The town's gay population is friendly, progressive, and proud.

Drive toward the ocean by heading southwest on Main St. (Hwy. 116) and veering slightly right onto Hwy. 1.

⑤ ★★ **kids** **Fort Ross State Historic Park.** What's now a historic park was the Russians' southernmost settlement in their attempt to colonize North America. Don't miss the Call Ranch House and its gardens or the Russian Cemetery. Fort Ross's natural wonders will surround you. *19005 Hwy. 1, Jenner.* ☎ *707/847-3286. www.parks.ca.gov. Park grounds open daily a half-hour before sunrise and close a half-hour after sunset ($8 per vehicle, $7 per vehicle for seniors). Historic buildings, the visitor center, and the bookstore are open Fri–Sun 10am–4:30pm. See p 113.*

The stunning estate of Paul Hobbs Winery near Sebastopol.



⑥ **Highway 1.** Yes, this 21-mile (34km) stretch of road is spectacular enough to merit its own bullet point—especially during sunset. You'll pass Goat Rock Beach, the Russian River headwaters, the seaside towns of Jenner and Bridge Haven, and a natural cutout called Duncan Cove. End in the resort town of Bodega Bay for a dinner overlooking the water. (See p 113 in chapter 5 for a more detailed description of this drive.)

7 **kids** **The Tides Wharf Restaurant & Bar.** All 150 seats at the Inn at the Tides's restaurant afford at least a decent view of the bay. Surroundings look familiar? You're perceptive: This dining room was the set for a raucous scene in Alfred Hitchcock's ***The Birds.*** Menu options include seafood, pasta, and housemade desserts. *835 Hwy. 1, Bodega Bay.* ☎ *707/875-3652. $$.*

DAY 7

8 ★★ **Hoffman House Café.** Have a hot breakfast in this homey dining room, made the more so by a brick fireplace and stained-glass windows. When you're done, buy a boxed lunch (about $10) from this family-owned restaurant specializing in California-style gourmet food. You'll want it later. *21712 Geyserville Ave. (at Geyserville Inn), Geyserville.* ☎ *707/857-3264. $$.*

Take Geyserville Ave. southeast.

Goat Rock Beach is one of the Sonoma coast's most spectacular beaches.

⑨ **Locals.** Taste Russian River–produced wines at this small, modern tasting room, which stocks more than 60 options from about 10 tiny wineries. The educational—and free—tasting experience lines up varietal flights, which means you get to taste, say, five merlots or six sauvignon blancs (served in Riedel crystal), to determine how different producers interpret the same type of grape. Buy a bottle of your favorite to complement the lunch you bought at Hoffman House. *21023 Geyserville Ave., Geyserville.* ☎ *707/857-4900. www.tastelocalwines.com. Daily 11am–6pm.*

Follow Geyserville Ave. southeast and get on Hwy. 101 S. Exit on Westside Rd. and turn left on Westside Rd. Stay straight to go onto Mill St., then turn right on Healdsburg Ave. Across the street from the state-beach entrance (before the bridge) is the:

⑩ ★★★ **kids** **Russian River.** Rent a canoe or kayak from an excellent company called River's Edge and float 15 miles (24km) from the Alexander Valley Campground to River's Edge Beach in Healdsburg. Watch as the biome becomes wooded, and keep an eye out for swimming holes, vineyards, and a good riverbank on which to enjoy your food and wine. The beach at Rio Lindo, 11 miles (18km) down, is a good option but part of the fun is choosing a spot and making it your own. To experience the river at a leisurely pace, allow about 6 hours. Guided trips are available upon request. Reservations recommended. See chapter 5 (p 114) for more details. *13840 Healdsburg Ave., Healdsburg.* ☎ *707/433-7247. www.riversedgekayakandcanoe.com. Canoes & double kayaks $75 for half-day; single kayaks $45 for half-day. Rentals include paddles, life vests, coolers, dry bags, and shuttle rides.*

Head south on Healdsburg Ave. to get on Hwy. 101 N. Exit on Dry Creek Rd. and turn left on Dry Creek Rd. Turn left on Yoakim Bridge Rd, and then right on Dry Creek Rd.

⑪ ★★ **Ferrari-Carano.** One of Sonoma's more beautiful wineries has an Italian château–style hospitality center. A highlight here, aside from tasting the chardonnay and other varietals, is walking through the wonderland of colorful flowers in the formal garden. Ponds, waterfalls, and walkways make your visit all the more magical. *8761 Dry Creek Rd., Healdsburg.* ☎ *707/433-6700. See p 147.*

How to Taste Wine Like a Pro

Stopping at tasting rooms to sample the goods is one of wine country's top rituals. Wine-tasting provides pleasure and a lesson in why the products Sonoma and Napa turn out rank so highly among the wines of the world.

Precautionary notes would say "taste moderately," for there are some 200 tasting rooms, and wine's virtues take time to notice. Because we're all on a very enjoyable learning curve, you can discover wine at many levels. If you should encounter a staffer with attitude (unfortunately, it happens), don't buy anything. Just move on to your next stop.

The time-honored techniques for tasting wine involve three steps: a good look, a good smell, and a good sip. You'll learn most quickly if you compare wines side by side. This will reveal differences and features you might not discern by tasting one wine at a time. Think of it as the wines talking to each other ("I'm smoother than you are," "I'm more puckery than all of you"). By listening to these little conversations, you can discover just how you want your wines to be.

Tasting rooms have their own rituals, usually offering a series of wines. When it seems appropriate, and when the tasting room isn't too busy, ask your host if you can do some comparisons.

—*John Thoreen, "The Wine Tutor,"* www.winetutor.com

12 Ⓐ ★★★ Dry Creek Kitchen. Healdsburg has no shortage of dining options, but celeb chef Charlie Palmer's place may be your top fine-dining option, especially now that Cyrus has closed. Palmer melds splendid seasonal cuisine, excellent service, and an elegant garden setting within the hip Hotel Healdsburg. See p 86. ***317 Healdsburg Ave.*** *☎ 707/431-0330. $$$$$.*

A more laid-back Healdsburg option is **12 Ⓑ ★ kids Bear Republic Brewing Co.** This high-energy American brewery with kitschy-but-fun decor is a great place for trying house-made beer and a greasy (in a good way) appetizer, burger, or pasta. ***345 Healdsburg Ave.*** *☎ 707/433-2337. $$.* ●

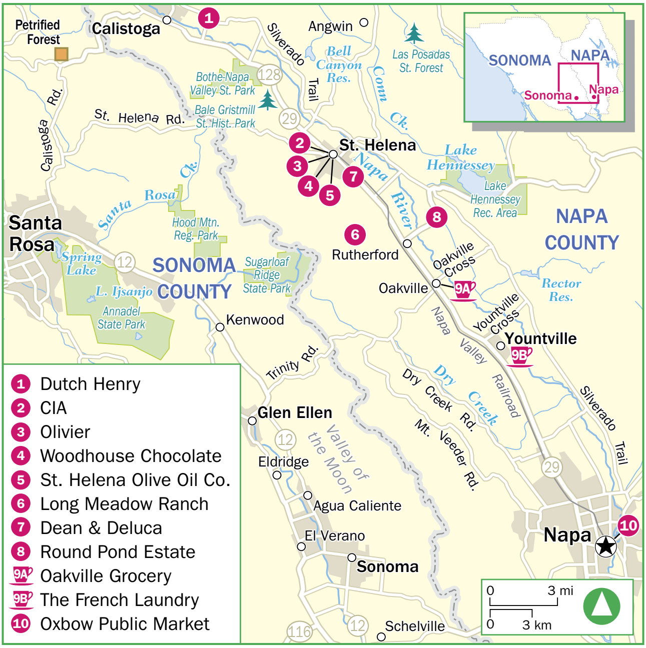
Ferrari-Carano is known for its pristine grounds and landscaping.

3

The Best Special-Interest Tours

Preston of Dry Creek
Farm and Winery
Zinfandel
Dry Creek Valley 2008
Made with Organic Grapes from our Vineyard

Wine Country **for Foodies**


Petrified Forest
Calistoga
Angwin
Silverado Trail
Bell Canyon Res.
Las Posadas St. Forest
Conn Ck.
SONOMA
NAPA
Sonoma
Napa
Bothe-Napa Valley St. Park
128
Calistoga Rd.
St. Helena Rd.
Bale Gristmill St. Hist. Park
29
St. Helena
Napa River
Lake Hennessey
Lake Hennessey Rec. Area
NAPA COUNTY
Santa Rosa
Santa Rosa Ck.
Hood Mtn. Reg. Park
Rutherford
Oakville Cross
Oakville
Rector Res.
Spring Lake
12
SONOMA COUNTY
Sugarloaf Ridge State Park
L. Ijsanjo
Annadel State Park
Kenwood
Napa Valley Railroad
Yountville Cross
Yountville
Trinity Rd.
Dry Creek Rd.
Dry Creek
Glen Ellen
Valley of the Moon
Mt. Veeder Rd.
Eldridge
Agua Caliente
El Verano
Sonoma
Napa
116
Schellville
0 3 mi
0 3 km
1 Dutch Henry
2 CIA
3 Olivier
4 Woodhouse Chocolate
5 St. Helena Olive Oil Co.
6 Long Meadow Ranch
7 Dean & Deluca
8 Round Pond Estate
9A Oakville Grocery
9B The French Laundry
10 Oxbow Public Market

If you're a foodie, Napa's your Disneyland. Oodles of specialty-food stores, farms, and culinary institutes are here to pique your interest. And to whet your appetite further, there's a farmers' market almost every day of the week (p 21). The endless food-and-wine pairings—mixed in with a smattering of some of the world's best restaurants and chefs—are the icing on the cake. START: **In Calistoga, at Dutch Henry. Distance: About 30 miles (48km), doable in a full day.**

① ★ **Dutch Henry.** This small family-owned winery produces just 5,000 cases of wine annually and even fewer cases of its acclaimed olive oil, which is so distinctive that it has its own tasting notes. The expertly blended extract of Italian, Spanish, and Mexican olives, at $34 per bottle, isn't cheap, but you can taste it for free. Reservations recommended. *4310 Silverado Trail, Calistoga.* ☎ *707/942-5771. www.dutchhenry.com. Wine tasting $20 for 6 wines, refundable with a 2-bottle purchase. Olive-oil tasting is free. Daily 10am–4:30pm.*

Head east on Silverado Trail. Turn right on Larkmead Lane, then left on Hwy. 29.

Previous page: Preston Winery is your best bet for a picnic spot in Dry Creek Valley.

② ★★★ **The Culinary Institute of America.** The West Coast arm of the New York heavyweight of food education (CIA, to insiders) is an imposing stone château to which wannabe chefs flock to sharpen their skills. Not an enrolled student? No worries: CIA has lots of attractions for visitors, including cooking demos, displays of ancient food-producing artifacts, and an extensive marketplace where you can buy all kinds of specialty ingredients, cooking tools, unique utensils, and more cookbooks than you could get through in a long lifetime. *2555 Hwy. 29, St. Helena.* ☎ *707/967-2320. www.ciachef.org. Cooking demos $20 at Spice Islands Marketplace (daily 10am–6pm); Wine Spectator Restaurant entrees $18–$40. Sun–Thurs 11:30am–9pm; Fri–Sat 11:30am–10pm.*

Keep heading south on Hwy. 29. When it becomes St. Helena's Main St., park your car.

③ ★★ **Olivier.** Sample, sample, sample at this French-inspired purveyor of epicurean delights. Big copper olive-oil dispensers line the walls, so try mixing your own—or shop for beautiful kitchenware from Provence. *1375 Main St.* ☎ *707/967-8777. See p 78.*

④ ★★ **Woodhouse Chocolate.** The gourmet handmade confections here cost a pretty penny—but to a true palate, they're worth the price. Try the fan-shaped Thai ginger tidbit or the brown-butter ganache ($1.85 each). *1367 Main St.* ☎ *800/966-3468. www.woodhousechocolate.com. 10:30am–5:30pm.*

⑤ ★ **St. Helena Olive Oil Co.** Foodies will relish the many olive oils, vinegars, honeys, compotes, flavored salts, tapenades, syrups, and sauces available to try here. *1351 Main St.* ☎ *707/968-9260. www.sholiveoil.com. Daily 10:30am–5pm.*

Chefs-in-training at the Culinary Institute of America.

Head south half a mile on Main St./Hwy. 29.

⑥ ★★ **Long Meadow Ranch Winery & Farmstead.** This innovative, organic farming operation is a winery known for its reds—but it's also an environmentally responsible ranch that supplies Napa's best restaurants with extra-virgin olive oil, eggs, and heirloom fruits and vegetables. To experience more than just the wine-and-olive-oil flights ($10–$20), consider the "Farm-to-Table" experience ($85; reservations required), which gets you a garden tour and a three-course meal plucked from the land. If you want to come back when you've got the morning and afternoon free, the $150 "Napa Valley Dream" tour starts with breakfast, then takes you through the home ranch, wine cave, and the valley's oldest olive orchards (planted in the 1870s), and ends with an estate-farmed lunch. *738 Main Street, St. Helena.*

The French Laundry is a once-in-a-lifetime culinary experience—book a month in advance.

☎ 707/963-4555. www.longmeadowranch.com. Tasting room open daily 11am–6pm (some require reservations).

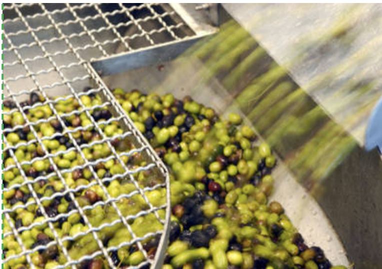
Head south a mile on Main St./Hwy. 29.

⑦ ★★ **Dean & Deluca.** California's only D&D outlet stocks fresh local produce, cheeses, and a fantastic array of international food products and gifts, plus 1,400 California wines. There's an espresso bar too, in case you need a pick-me-up after all of today's grazing. *607 St. Helena Hwy. (Hwy. 29), St. Helena. ☎ 707/967-9980. www.deandeluca.com. Sun–Thurs 7am–7pm; Fri–Sat 7am–8pm.*

Head south 2.6 miles on Hwy. 29, then turn left onto Rutherford Rd. After about a mile, you'll see:

⑧ ★★ **Round Pond Estate.** If you don't want to pay for Long Meadow's more expensive tour, make an appointment at Round Pond, which also makes artisan olive oil and premium red wine. You'll see olive orchards and learn about harvesting techniques and oil-extraction processes. Afterward, taste the Italian and Spanish olive-oil varieties paired with estate-grown vegetables while an expert teaches you the oils' many culinary uses. *886 Rutherford Rd., Napa. ☎ 707/302-2575. www.roundpond.com. Tours ($30) by appt. only.*

9A ★★ **Oakville Grocery.** If you didn't already picnic at Long Meadow, Napa's two true foodie options for lunch are on opposite ends of the fanciness scale. The recently renovated (but 130-year-old) Oakville Grocery is a casual, crowded little store selling gourmet foodstuffs (much of it locally made and available for sampling) and sporting a nice wine selection in the back. Buy delectable ready-made sandwiches and entrees, and at the espresso bar, coffee drinks to go. There's an ice-cream counter too. If you're lucky, you'll spot Martha Stewart, a regular here, shopping for flavored salts. *7856 St. Helena Hwy. (Hwy. 29), Oakville. ☎ 707/944-8802. Daily 6am–6pm. $.* The second option? You guessed it: 9B ★★★ **The French Laundry,** a culinary experience every gourmand should have. Reservations are required—try a month in advance. Even if you can't get in, wander through Thomas Keller's expansive herb garden across the street from his restaurant. *6640 Washington St., Yountville. ☎ 707/944-2380. $$$$$. See p 93.*



Get a hands-on demonstration of the olive-oil-making process at Round Pond Estate.

From Round Pond Estate, go north on Rutherford Rd./Hwy. 128, which becomes the Silverado Trail. Turn left on Trancas St., then right back onto the Silverado Trail. Turn right on 1st St.

⑩ **Oxbow Public Market.** Finish the day by sampling the best in local wines and artisanal foods. A veritable farmers' market that's open daily, Oxbow sits in the heart of downtown Napa. Dessert sounding good right about now? Go for one of the spiced ice creams at Three Twins. *610 & 644 1st St.* ☎ *707/226.6529. www.oxbowpublicmarket.com.*

three twins

Oxbow Public Market carries Three Twins ice cream—try Dad's Cardamom flavor.

A Foodie Tour of Sonoma County

If you're a foodie in Sonoma, spend as much time as possible on **Sonoma County Farm Trails,** a network of local, sustainable farms that encourages visitors to come and not only buy, but also interact by picking berries, touring apiaries, taking hayrides, and petting farm animals. Visit the website to order a free map and guide. ☎ *707/837-8896. www.farmtrails.org.* Up in Healdsburg, **Relish Culinary Adventures** (p 83) offers cooking classes and local farm tours. You'll also find a buffet of gourmet dining options around Healdsburg plaza, including **Barndiva.** *231 Center St.* ☎ *707/431-0100. See p 86.* In Sonoma, try the seasonal menu at **El Dorado Kitchen.** Its chef, Ryan Fancher, was trained by Thomas Keller, who taught him to use French techniques to showcase wine country's regional bounty. Fancher takes familiar classics (like grilled cheese) and gives them a modern tweak. Best of all? The prices are reasonable. *405 1st St. W., Sonoma.* ☎ *707/996-3030 or 800/289-3030. See p 77.* If you're a pasta fan, try **Della Santina's,** a family-owned trattoria just off Sonoma's town square. Its Northern Italian food has been a Sonoma staple for more than 20 years and is a local favorite. *133 E. Napa St., Sonoma.* ☎ *707/935-0576.* Visit **The Olive Press,** an exceptional olive-oil-pressing facility dedicated to making extra-virgin California oils, which are sold alongside culinary delights like tapenades, specialty crackers, and distinctive balsamic vinegars. *24724 Arnold Dr., Sonoma (at Jacizzi Family Vineyards).* ☎ *800/965-4839.* To satisfy your sweet tooth, milk the **Chocolate Cow,** tucked into a Sonoma alleyway, for all it's worth. Choose from a variety of fudges and chocolates, or on a hot day, get your favorite ice-cream flavor topped with shaved ice ($6). *452 1st St. E., Ste. F.* ☎ *707/509-3985. Daily 11am–6pm (weekends until 9pm).*

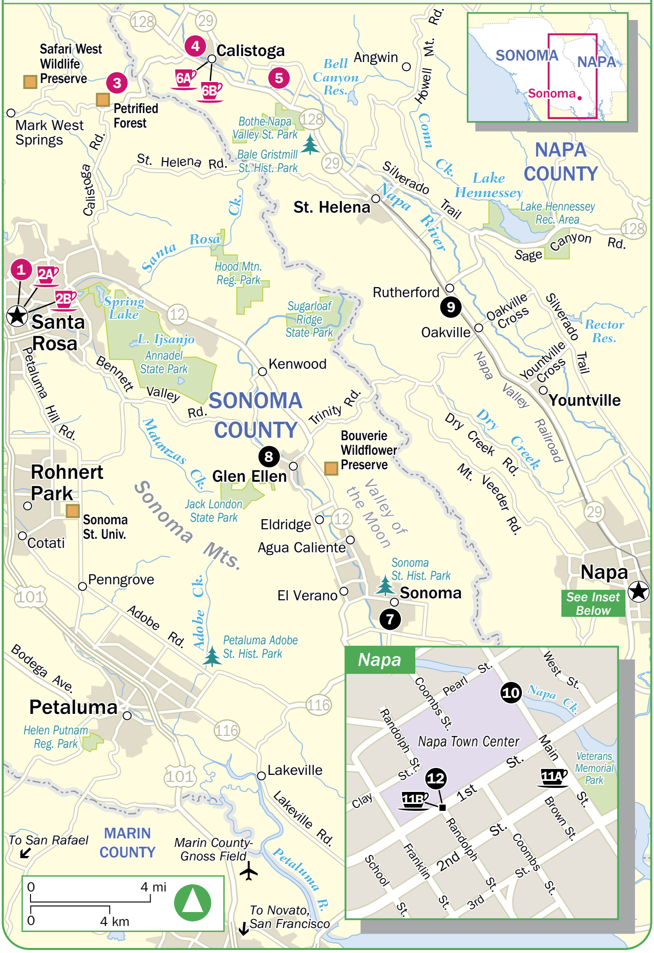
Wine Country **with Kids**

DAY 1

1 Charles M. Schulz Museum
2A La Rosa
2B Fresh Choice
3 Petrified Forest
4 Old Faithful Geyser of California
5 Sterling Vineyards
6A Checkers
6B Pacifico

DAY 2

7 Train Town
8 Benziger Family Winery
9 St. Supéry Winery
10 Napa Firefighters Museum
11A Downtown Joe's
11B Taqueria Rosita
12 Ben & Jerry's


SONOMA
NAPA
Sonoma
NAPA COUNTY
SONOMA COUNTY
MARIN COUNTY
Calistoga
Angwin
Bell Canyon Res.
Howell Mt. Rd.
Safari West Wildlife Preserve
Petrified Forest
Mark West Springs
Calistoga Rd.
St. Helena Rd.
Bothe-Napa Valley St. Park
Bale Gristmill St. Hist. Park
Silverado Trail
Conn Ck.
Lake Hennessey
Lake Hennessey Rec. Area
Sage Canyon Rd.
St. Helena
Napa River
Ck.
Santa Rosa
Hood Mtn. Reg. Park
Sugarloaf Ridge State Park
Rutherford
Oakville
Oakville Cross
Rector Res.
Yountville Cross
Yountville
Napa Valley Railroad
Spring Lake
L. Ijsanjo
Annadel State Park
Bennett Valley Rd.
Petaluma Hill Rd.
Kenwood
Trinity Rd.
Dry Creek Rd.
Dry Creek
Mt. Veeder Rd.
Matanzas Ck.
Bouverie Wildflower Preserve
Glen Ellen
Jack London State Park
Valley of the Moon
Rohnert Park
Sonoma St. Univ.
Cotati
Sonoma Mts.
Eldridge
Agua Caliente
Penngrove
El Verano
Sonoma St. Hist. Park
Sonoma
Napa
See Inset Below
Adobe Rd.
Adobe Ck.
Petaluma Adobe St. Hist. Park
Bodega Ave.
Petaluma
Helen Putnam Reg. Park
Lakeville
Lakeville Rd.
To San Rafael
Marin County-Gnoss Field
Petaluma R.
To Novato, San Francisco
0 4 mi
0 4 km
128
29
12
101
116
Napa
Pearl St.
Coombs St.
West St.
Napa Ck.
Randolph St.
Napa Town Center
Main St.
Veterans Memorial Park
Clay
1st St.
Brown St.
Randolph St.
School St.
Franklin St.
2nd St.
3rd
Coombs St.
1
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2B
3
4
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6A
6B
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10
11A
11B
12

True, Napa and Sonoma are no Anaheim or Orlando, but that doesn't mean there isn't a lot to do for families wanting to spend quality time together. Some local attractions were actually designed with kids in mind. Others, while not specifically aimed at entertaining children, can definitely accommodate youngsters while educating, perhaps even enthralling, them. ***Tip:*** Flip through this book to find attractions marked with the **kids** symbol. **START: Charles M. Schulz Museum. Time: Two full days. Distance: About 20 miles (32km) on Day 1; 40 miles (64km) on Day 2.**

DAY 1

① ★★ **Charles M. Schulz Museum.** Charlie Brown is practically Santa Rosa's logo: Charles "Sparky" Schulz lived here most of his adult life. In his honor, town residents opened this museum in 2002, less than 2 years after he died. An introductory video, narrated by Schulz's wife, Jean, reveals the local rituals that were a part of the cartoonist's daily life, including his involvement with the **Redwood Empire Ice Arena** adjacent to the museum. Exhibits include a faithful replica of Schulz's studio (with his original drawing board, books, and photos); the "Morphing Snoopy Sculpture," a huge artwork portraying Snoopy's many personas; and a mural that, at first glance, looks like that ubiquitous image of Lucy holding the football for Charlie Brown. Look closer, however, and you'll see that the image is actually made of 3,588 comic images printed on small ceramic tiles. You can buy just about any *Peanuts*-themed product you can think up in the massive gift shop. Outside, a Snoopy-shaped contemplative labyrinth adds dimension. *2301 Hardies Lane, Santa Rosa.* ☎ *707/579-4452. www.schulzmuseum.org. Admission $10 adults; $5 seniors 62+, students & kids ages 4–18. Sept–May Mon & Wed–Fri 11am–5pm (Sat–Sun opens at 10am); May–Sept daily 11am–5pm (Sat–Sun opens at 10am).*

You're the greatest, Charlie Brown.

2A **kids** **La Rosa,** a big, festive Mexican restaurant, is particularly child-friendly. *500 4th St.* ☎ *707/523-3663. $$.* Also worth a visit: 2B **kids** **Fresh Choice,** a buffet-style restaurant where you can fill up on healthy options for less than $10. *1018 Santa Rosa Plaza (at 4th St.).* ☎ *707/525-0912. $$.*

From Hardies Lane, turn left on W. Steele Lane, left on Guerneville Rd., then left on Hwy. 101 N. Exit at River Rd. and turn right on Mark Springs Rd. (It turns to the right and becomes Porter Creek Rd.) Turn left at Petrified Forest Rd.

③ ★★ **Petrified Forest.** Kids can find interesting petrified specimens at this 3.4-million-year-old grove. Volcanic ash blanketed this area after the same eruptions that caused Mount St. Helena to burst forth. The giant redwoods here have since turned to stone through slow

Stone logs fascinate both children and adults at the Petrified Forest.

infiltration of silicates and other minerals. Take your kids on the quarter-mile (.4km) walking trail and tell them to keep an eye out for the park's many marine fossils. There's an interesting museum, as well as a discovery shop and picnic grounds. *4100 Petrified Forest Rd., Calistoga. ☎ 707/942-6667. www.petrifiedforest.org. Adults $10, $9 seniors 62+ and kids ages 12–17, $5 kids 6–11, free for kids 5 and under (docent-led tours cost more). Daily 9am–7pm (5pm in winter; 6pm in spring and fall).*

Head northeast on Petrified Forest Rd. for nearly 4 miles (6.4km), then turn left on Foothill Blvd./Hwy. 128. Turn right on Tubbs Lane.

④ ★ **Old Faithful Geyser of California.** One of the world's three "old faithful" geysers is named for its dependable eruptions every 40 minutes, spewing 350°F (177°C) water as high as 60 feet (18m). Kids get delighted during the 3-minute performance. While waiting, they can peruse educational exhibits about seismic activity and California history in the exhibit hall, which also houses a gift shop and a snack bar. The site also keeps fainting goats, which look like regular goats until they're slightly startled. Then they stiffen up and fall right over. *1299 Tubbs Lane, Calistoga. ☎ 707/942-6463. www.oldfaithfulgeyser.com. Admission $10 adults, $7 seniors 60+, $3 kids ages 6–12, free for kids 5 and under. Daily 9am–6pm (5pm in winter).*

From Tubbs Lane, turn right onto Hwy. 29, then left on Silverado Trail. Turn right on Dunaweal Lane.

⑤ ★★ **Sterling Vineyards.** Now that your kids have developed a thorough affinity for the area, take them along for wine tasting. What's that? You can't do wineries with children? Think again. At Sterling, kids will love the aerial gondola that brings you in. The $10 kids' admission fee includes a goodie bag ($20 adults, free for kids 4 and under), and young ones might enjoy seeing the artifacts and videos along the multimedia self-guided tour. Parents will certainly enjoy tasting the four wines poured in the panoramic tasting room. *1111 Dunaweal Lane, Calistoga. ☎ 707/942-3300. See p 160.*

Go south on Dunaweal Lane to turn right on Hwy. 29/128. Turn left on Petrified Forest Rd.

6A **Checkers.** Kids love the pizza and calzones at this cheerful restaurant. *1414 Lincoln Ave. ☎ 707/942-9300. $$. See p 106.* Or treat them to Mexican fare at colorful 6B ★ **Pacifico.** *1237 Lincoln Ave. ☎ 707/942-4400. $$. See p 106.*

DAY 2

⑦ ★ **Train Town.** It may not be all bells and whistles for adults, but that's exactly what Train Town is for tots. In this mini-amusement park, the theme is locomotion—as in train rides on a scaled-down railroad that traverses the wooded property, over bridges, and past doting parents. Other attractions here include a petting zoo, a Ferris wheel, and a carousel. *20264 Broadway, Sonoma.* ☎ *707/938-3912. www.traintown.com. Tickets $5.25 per train ride; $2.75 per amusement ride (a book of 6 tickets costs $12). Daily 10am–5pm (closed holidays).*

Take Broadway south to turn left on Leveroni Rd., then right on Arnold Dr. Turn left on London Ranch Rd.

⑧ ★★ **Benziger Family Winery.** At this family-owned winery, the 45-minute tractor-drawn tram tour entertains kids and educates them about the agricultural processes that make wine. Tours are first-come, first-served, so if it's high season, come in the morning to buy tickets for later. *1883 London Ranch Rd., Glen Ellen.* ☎ *888/490-2739. See p 138.*

Go northeast on London Ranch Rd. and turn left on Arnold Dr. Turn left on Sonoma Hwy./Hwy. 12, then right on Trinity Rd., which becomes Dry Creek Rd. Stay straight onto Oakville Grade Rd., then turn left on Hwy. 29.

⑨ **St. Supéry Winery.** The emphasis here is on education. During the self-guided tour, kids wander through a demonstration vineyard and learn about growing techniques. Inside, they'll gravitate toward coloring books and SmellaVision, an interactive display that sprays out smells of different grape varieties. *8440 St. Helena Hwy. (Hwy. 29), Rutherford.* ☎ *800/942-0809. See p 159.*

Take Hwy. 29 south and make a slight right on Solano Ave., then right onto W. Lincoln Ave. Turn right on Main St.

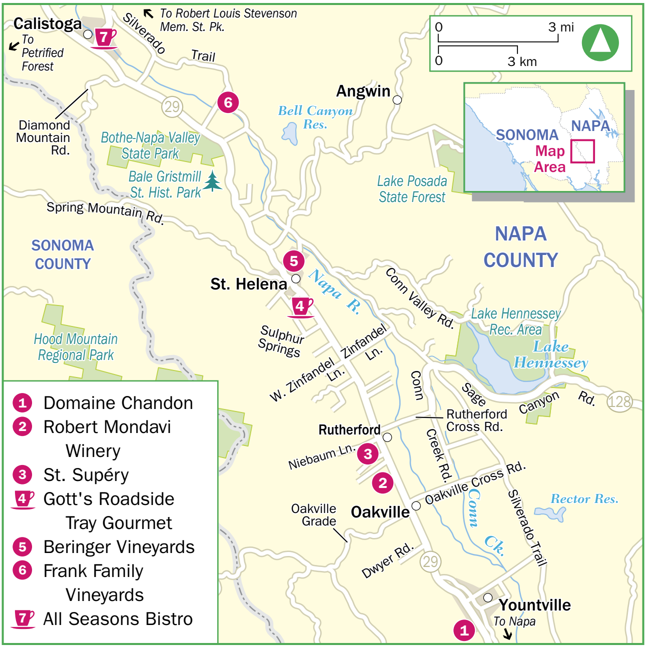
⑩ ★ **Napa Firefighters Museum.** Kids' never-failing fascination for all things firefighter-related will be stoked at this small museum, which exhibits antiquated as well as modern firefighting equipment, including a hand-pumper from 1859, engines from the early 20th century, a 1904 horse-drawn steamer, and uniforms and badges from all over the world. Little ones will enjoy the collection of toy firetrucks and the two huge stuffed Dalmatians. Older kids will take more pleasure in the replica firehouse and the 1913 Model T Ford. *1201 Main St., Napa.* ☎ *707/259-0609. www.napafirefightersmuseum.org. Free admission. Open Wed–Sat (& some Sun) 11am–4pm.*

11 Ⓐ ★ **Downtown Joe's.** A short walk from the Firefighters Museum is this child-friendly (and pet-friendly) American grill and brewery. *902 Main St., Napa.* ☎ *707/258-2337. $$.* If the fam's more in the mood for Mexican, popular 11 Ⓑ ★ **Taqueria Rosita** is inexpensive but maintains a Napa feel. *1214 Main St., Napa.* ☎ *707/253-9208. $.*

Afterward, stop at 12 **Ben & Jerry's** for a big scoop of the Vermont company's latest quirky flavor, whatever it may be. *1299 Napa Town Center, Napa.* ☎ *707/253-0484. $.*

Get a tram ride and a tour of the biodynamic farms of Benziger.

Wine Country **for First-Timers**


Calistoga
To Petrified Forest
Silverado Trail
To Robert Louis Stevenson Mem. St. Pk.
0 3 mi
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Angwin
Bell Canyon Res.
SONOMA
NAPA
Map Area
Diamond Mountain Rd.
29
Bothe-Napa Valley State Park
Bale Gristmill St. Hist. Park
Lake Posada State Forest
Spring Mountain Rd.
SONOMA COUNTY
NAPA COUNTY
St. Helena
Napa R.
Conn Valley Rd.
Sulphur Springs
Zinfandel Ln.
W. Zinfandel Ln.
Lake Hennessey Rec. Area
Lake Hennessey
Hood Mountain Regional Park
Conn Creek Rd.
Sage Canyon Rd.
128
Rutherford
Rutherford Cross Rd.
Niebaum Ln.
Oakville Grade
Oakville
Oakville Cross Rd.
Conn Ck.
Silverado Trail
Rector Res.
Dwyer Rd.
Yountville
To Napa
1 Domaine Chandon
2 Robert Mondavi Winery
3 St. Supéry
4 Gott's Roadside Tray Gourmet
5 Beringer Vineyards
6 Frank Family Vineyards
7 All Seasons Bistro

A Napa novice? Not to worry: Highway 29 will show you the way. Following the path outlined below will up your wine-knowledge quotient and ensure that you leave wine country closer to "connoisseur." Plus, you'll be able to go home knowing that you've really gotten a sense for Napa Valley and its wineries. **START: Domaine Chandon, 1 California Dr. (at Hwy. 29), Yountville. Distance: About 17 miles (27km), doable in a full day.**

① ★ **Domaine Chandon.** The comprehensive tour walks you through the entire bubbly-making process, from the cellars to the riddling room and the bottling line. You'll also learn about the winery's history, including how the French champagne house Moët et Chandon founded it in 1973. *1 California Dr. (at Hwy. 29), Yountville. ☎ 707/944-2280. See p 146.*

Drive northeast on California Dr., then merge onto Hwy. 29 N.

② ★★ **Robert Mondavi Winery.** The basic, hour-long production tour covers all aspects of the winemaking process and gives you a look at the destemmer-crusher, the tank room, the bottling room, and the vineyard. Top-notch guides consistently make sure you know what you're looking at. Make

The stone mushrooms are an elegant touch at Domaine Chandon.

reservations in advance. *7801 St. Helena Hwy. (Hwy. 29), Oakville.* ☎ *707/226-1395. See p 158.*

Keep heading north on Hwy. 29.

3 ★ **St. Supéry Winery.** This straightforward winery is a great place for first-timers to learn more about oenology. Its emphasis is education—while here, you've got to try "SmellaVision," an interactive display that teaches you how to identify various wine aromas and attributes. There's also a demonstration vineyard where you can learn about growing techniques. *8440 St. Helena Hwy. (Hwy. 29), Rutherford.* ☎ *800/942-0809. See p 159.*

4 ★ **Gott's Roadside Tray Gourmet.** For a quick bite, stop at this burger shack with an impressive wine selection. *933 Main St., St. Helena.* ☎ *707/963-3486. $. See p 80.*

Keep heading north on Hwy. 29.

5 ★★ **Beringer Vineyards.** This winery pioneered the idea of public tours in 1934, and it's obvious that Beringer has since perfected that brainchild. Today, Napa's oldest continually operating winery offers four tour options ranging from a basic introduction to a thorough exploration of Beringer's vintage legacy. *2000 Main St., St. Helena.* ☎ *707/-967-4412. For details, see p 138.*

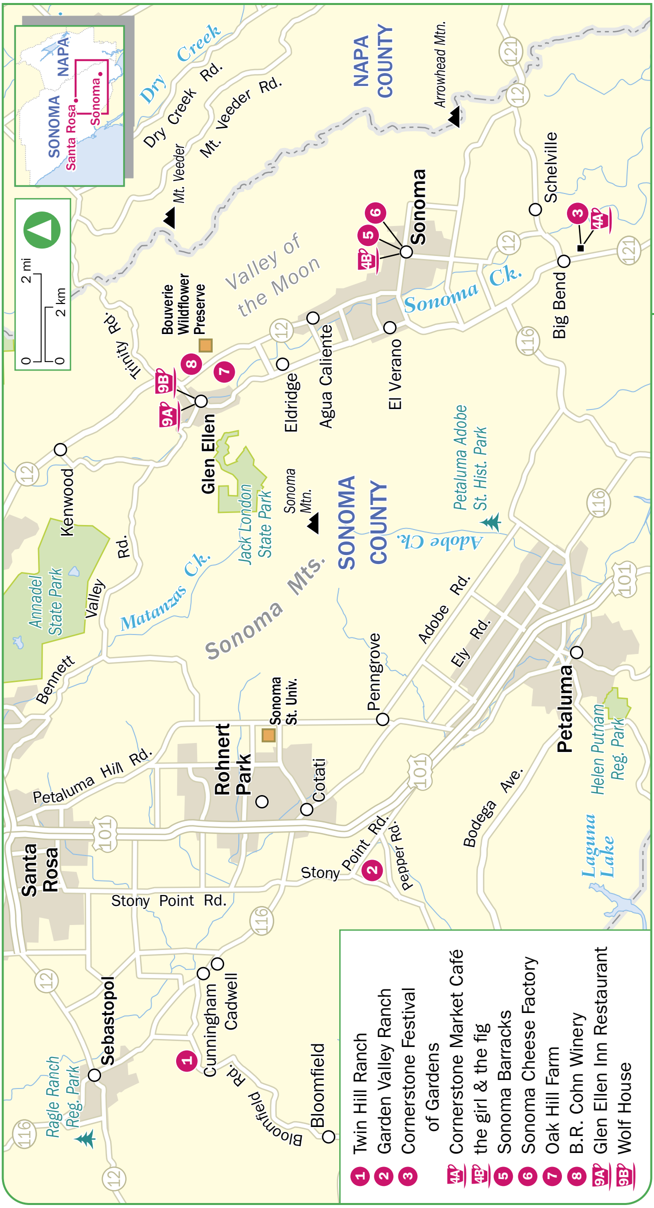
Keep heading north on Hwy. 29 for about 4 miles (6.4km), then turn left on Larkmead Lane.

6 **Frank Family Vineyards.** Napa's least intimidating winery is staffed with exceptionally attentive employees who take the time to explain anything you want to know about wine. *1091 Larkmead Lane, Calistoga.* ☎ *800/574-9463. See p 148.*

7 ★★ **All Seasons Bistro.** The California-cuisine menu (fresh, local ingredients) matches wines to dishes so you'll know what's just right for the entree you choose. *1400 Lincoln Ave., Calistoga.* ☎ *707/942-9111. $$$. See p 105.*

Step into your tasting room at Beringer Vineyards.

Wine Country **for Nondrinkers**


SONOMA
NAPA
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Dry Creek
Dry Creek Rd.
Mt. Veeder Rd.
Mt. Veeder
NAPA COUNTY
Arrowhead Mtn.
Valley of the Moon
Bouverie Wildflower Preserve
Trinity Rd.
Sonoma
Schelville
Big Bend
Sonoma Ck.
El Verano
Agua Caliente
Eldridge
Glen Ellen
Kenwood
Jack London State Park
Sonoma Mtn.
SONOMA COUNTY
Petaluma Adobe St. Hist. Park
Adobe Ck.
Annadel State Park
Valley Rd.
Matanzas Ck.
Sonoma Mts.
Bennett
Adobe Rd.
Ely Rd.
Penngrove
Sonoma St. Univ.
Rohnert Park
Cotati
Petaluma Hill Rd.
Petaluma
Helen Putnam Reg. Park
Bodega Ave.
Laguna Lake
Santa Rosa
Stony Point Rd.
Pepper Rd.
Sebastopol
Cunningham
Cadwell
Bloomfield Rd.
Bloomfield
Ragle Ranch Reg. Park
12
101
116
121
① Twin Hill Ranch
② Garden Valley Ranch
③ Cornerstone Festival of Gardens
4A Cornerstone Market Café
4B the girl & the fig
⑤ Sonoma Barracks
⑥ Sonoma Cheese Factory
⑦ Oak Hill Farm
⑧ B.R. Cohn Winery
9A Glen Ellen Inn Restaurant
9B Wolf House

Want to visit wine country but put off because you don't drink alcohol? Come anyway. Though wine put this region on the map, the tourism and agriculture industries have kept it there, making sure that visitors are kept interested both before and after the tasting room. As a result, there's now a plethora of non-wine-related activities for those who just want to take a relaxing trip to the California countryside to do some wine-free sampling and seeing. Here's how to get the wine-country experience without the wine. ***Note:*** For nonalcoholic attractions in addition to these, also see the itineraries for foodies (p 32), history buffs (p 46), art aficionados (p 50), and outdoor enthusiasts (p 108). **START: Twin Hill Ranch, 1689 Pleasant Hill Rd., Sebastopol. Distance: About 40 miles (64km), doable in a day.**

❶ ★ **kids** **Twin Hill Ranch.** Keep the doctor away with a visit to this Sebastopol operation that's been growing, packing, and shipping apples since 1942. In its country store (the perfect place to buy a gift for a teacher), taste the ranch's signature apple bread, plus pies, cookies, juice, sauce, butter, and jelly, all made with the potassium-rich fruit grown on this ridiculously fertile land. Tours show you how the ranch produces and distributes 10 apple varieties, including Gravenstein, Gala, and Fuji. *1689 Pleasant Hill Rd., Sebastopol.* ☎ *707/823-2815. www.twinhillranch.com. Call ahead for tour appointments and pricing. Mon–Sat 9am–5pm (open Sun Thanksgiving to Christmas).*

Go west on Pleasant Hill Rd., which becomes Bloomfield Rd. Turn right on Lone Pine Rd., then right on Gravenstein Hwy./Hwy. 116. Turn right on Stony Point Rd., then right on Jewett Rd., then left on Pepper Rd.

❷ ★★ **Garden Valley Ranch.** Did you know that apples are a member of the rose family? Continue the theme at this nine-acre (3.6-hectare) Victorian ranch, which blooms with more than 8,000 rosebushes, a

An apple a day . . .

Indulge in a cheese plate at the girl & the fig.

fragrance garden, and a test garden (where rosarians try to develop new species). On spring weekends, the ranch hosts tours (call ahead to make an appointment), during which lunch is served alongside an assortment of teas in the fragrance garden, which overlooks thousands of roses. There's also a retail nursery where you can buy many kinds of flowers, from antique, climbing, and miniature roses to floribundas, hybrid teas, and colorful annuals, plus gardening supplies, seeds, and books. *498 Pepper Rd., Petaluma.* ☎ *707/795-0919. www.gardenvalley.com. Nursery open Wed–Sun 10am–4pm. Self-guided tours ($5, including a descriptive booklet) Wed–Sun by appt. only; docent-guided tours cost $10 (including a descriptive booklet) and are available by appt. but require a minimum of 20 people.*

From Pepper Rd., get on Hwy. 101 S. Take Hwy. 116 E., then turn left on Frates Rd., which becomes Adobe Rd., which becomes Hwy. 116 again, then becomes Hwy. 121.

③ ★★ **Cornerstone Festival of Gardens.** Prominent landscape architects designed these nine acres (3.6 hectares) of 20 gardens, whose walk-through outdoor spaces are aimed at those interested in high-concept gardening. The on-site shops include the **Barn Gallery,** which displays information about each installation and its designer, while **A New Leaf Gallery** *(*☎ *707/933-1300)* sells beautiful indoor and outdoor modern sculptures from more than 50 artists. **Country by Eurasian Interiors** *(*☎ *415/775-1610)* deals in restored antiques and a worldly selection of home accessories. **Artefact Design & Salvage** *(*☎ *707/933-0660)* offers vintage garden pieces and found objects. *23570 Arnold Dr. (Hwy. 121), Sonoma.* ☎ *707/933-3010. www.cornerstonegardens.com. 10am–4pm (may close at 3pm for special events). Free admission, though docent tours for groups of 10 or more cost $6 per person (reservations required).*

4A ★ **Cornerstone Market Café.** The seasonal lunch menu at this cute food shop lists panini sandwiches, soups, and salads; order from that or put together a meal from the artisan foods sold in the grocery section. *23584A Hwy. 121, Sonoma.* ☎ *707/933-4422. $.*

Take Hwy. 121 northwest, then turn right on Watmaugh Rd. and left on Broadway. Turn right on E. Napa St.

For a more comprehensive sit-down meal, head to the beloved 4B ★★ **the girl & the fig,** just off Sonoma Plaza. Cheese sampling at the restaurant's well-stocked *salon de fromage* is a great alternative to wine tasting. *110 W. Spain St. (in the Sonoma Hotel).* ☎ *707/938-3634. $$. See p 77.*

⑤ ★★ **kids** **Sonoma Barracks.** Cross 1st St. again to get to this landmark, part of Sonoma State Historic Park. General Vallejo, whose assignment it was to secularize the mission, kept his Mexican troops here to guard against Native American tribes and rebuff possible threats (though none ever developed) from Russian settlers. During and after the revolt, these barracks were the Bear Flag Party headquarters. When the U.S. took over, American soldiers moved in for a spell. Since then, it's been a winery, a law office, and a private residence, among other things. It became state property in 1958, and today there are two museum rooms and a theater where you can catch the 22-minute video about Vallejo. History buffs will appreciate the giftshop merchandise. ***Tip:*** If possible, coincide your visit with the every-other-Saturday 2pm firing of the cannon. *E. Spain St. & 1st St. E.* ☎ *707/939-9420. www.parks.ca.gov. Daily 10am–5pm. Admission $3 for adults, $2 for children. Admission also includes Mission San Francisco Solano (p 76).*

⑥ ★ **Sonoma Cheese Factory.** Walk across the plaza to this third-generation family enterprise, the first cheese producer west of the Mississippi to win a gold medal from the authoritative Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association. Here, you can sample cheeses to your heart's content. *2 E. Spain St., Sonoma.* ☎ *800/535-2855. See p 76.*

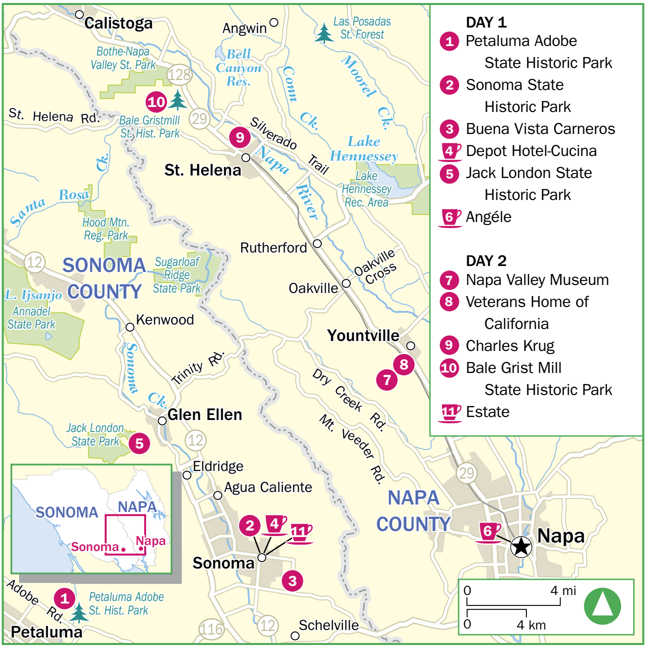
From Spain St., turn left on 1st St., then right on Napa St. Make a slight right on Sonoma Hwy./Hwy. 12.

⑦ ★★ **Oak Hill Farm.** This 45-acre (18-hectare) farm and its **Red Barn Store** have existed since the 1950s, and Oak Hill still grows its remarkable heirloom vegetables entirely sustainably. The real highlight here is the century-old dairy barn housing the store. More than just an old-fashioned farm stand (though it's that too), this is a unique place to buy organic produce, fresh flowers, beautiful wreaths, and handmade gifts amid a farm's bountiful fields. *15101 Hwy. 12, Glen Ellen.* ☎ *707/996-6643. www.oakhillfarm.net. Apr–Dec Wed–Sun 11am–6pm.*

⑧ **B.R. Cohn Winery.** Yes, this is a winery, but the estate also specializes in gourmet (and pricey) olive oils and handcrafted vinegars. Sample them in the small tasting room, which is filled with framed platinum albums from vintner Bruce Cohn's other job as manager of the Doobie Brothers. His property is graced with groves of rare olive trees, terraced hills of plush lawn, and several picnic tables. As you'd expect from a connected fellow like Cohn, many musical events happen here. Check the website to see what's coming soon. *15000 Hwy. 12, Glen Ellen.* ☎ *800/330-4064. www.brcohn.com. See p 139.*

9A ★ **Glen Ellen Inn Restaurant.** This homey dining room serves seasonal cuisine. Reservations recommended. *13670 Arnold Dr., Glen Ellen.* ☎ *707/996-6409. $$$. See p 96.* Another local option is **9B** ★ **Wolf House,** a classy but relaxed joint with local food and warm service. *13740 Arnold Dr., Glen Ellen.* ☎ *707/996-4401. Reservations recommended. $$.*

Wine Country for History Buffs


DAY 1
① Petaluma Adobe State Historic Park
② Sonoma State Historic Park
③ Buena Vista Carneros
4 Depot Hotel-Cucina
⑤ Jack London State Historic Park
6 Angéle
DAY 2
⑦ Napa Valley Museum
⑧ Veterans Home of California
⑨ Charles Krug
⑩ Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park
11 Estate
Calistoga
Angwin
Las Posadas St. Forest
Bothe-Napa Valley St. Park
Bell Canyon Res.
Conn Ck.
Moore Ck.
128
St. Helena Rd.
Bale Gristmill St. Hist. Park
29
Silverado Trail
Napa River
Lake Hennessey
Lake Hennessey Rec. Area
St. Helena
Santa Rosa Ck.
Hood Mtn. Reg. Park
Rutherford
12
SONOMA COUNTY
Sugarloaf Ridge State Park
Oakville Cross
Oakville
L. Ijsanjo
Annadel State Park
Kenwood
Yountville
Sonoma Ck.
Trinity Rd.
Dry Creek Rd.
Glen Ellen
Mt. Veeder Rd.
Jack London State Park
Eldridge
Agua Caliente
NAPA COUNTY
SONOMA
NAPA
Sonoma
Napa
Adobe Rd.
Petaluma Adobe St. Hist. Park
Petaluma
116
Schelville
0 4 mi
0 4 km

To get to the real roots of the land, beyond tasting rooms and newly built tourist attractions—and to find out why so many from so far came here with dreams of paradise so many years ago—follow this northwest-bound, county-crossing itinerary. It'll give you an overview of wine country's rich cultural, political, and agricultural history, and will help you get to know Sonoma's and Napa's most colorful historical characters, including General Mariano G. Vallejo (California's last Mexican governor), the members of the Bear Flag Party, Agoston Haraszthy, American veterans, and Jack London. **START: Petaluma Adobe State Historic Park, 3325 Adobe Rd., Petaluma. Distance: About 40 miles (64km), doable in 2 days.**

① ★★ kids **Petaluma Adobe State Historic Park.** What's now a state-owned site was, in the mid-1800s, General Vallejo's working *rancho,* which he used for commercial ventures like growing crops, rearing cattle, raising sheep, and breeding horses. After Vallejo was taken captive during the 1846 Bear Revolt, squatters took over. In the early 1900s, the state acquired the land and made it a historic park, refurnishing many of the rooms in the adobe-and-redwood main building with authentic artifacts to bring history back alive. Start at the

Visitor Center to see exhibits portraying some of the agricultural and domestic activities that happened here. Then get maps to tour the historic Petaluma Adobe house. *3325 Adobe Rd. (off Hwy. 116), Petaluma.* ☎ *707/762-4871. www.parks.ca.gov. Tues–Wed 10am–5pm. Admission $3 adults, $2 children (also good at the mission, barracks, and Lachryma Montis).*

Take Hwy. 116 east and turn left onto Watmaugh Rd. Turn left onto Broadway/Hwy. 12 and continue 1 mile (1.6km) until you hit Sonoma. Park at the Plaza.

② ★★★ kids **Sonoma State Historic Park.** Less a park than it is a series of historic attractions throughout town, a thorough visit should include **Mission San Francisco Solano (p 75),** the **Bear Flag Monument,** the **Sonoma Barracks (p 76),** the **Blue Wing Inn (p 76),** and, if you're in town at the right time, a tour of **Toscano Hotel (p 76).** *Main office: 363 W. 3rd St. (at W. Spain St.).* ☎ *707/938-9560. www.parks.ca.gov. Admission $3 adults, $2 children (includes all SHP sites). Hours vary; call ahead.*

The Mission San Francisco Solano is one of Sonoma's most famous landmarks.

Also part of the park is **Lachryma Montis,** where Vallejo lived with his wife after the Bear Flag Party deposed him in 1846. In 1933, the state acquired the property and opened it to the public. Today, it (and an adjacent museum) continues to educate visitors. *W. Spain St., near E. 3rd St., Sonoma.* ☎ *707/938-9559. Admission $3 adults, $2 children (includes all SHP sites). Occasional free docent-led weekend tours; call ahead for schedule. Tues–Sun 10am–5pm (closed Mon).*

From 1st St., turn left on W. Spain St., then right on E. 2nd St. A left on E. Napa St. will bring you to Old Winery Rd. Turn left to get to:

Historical items on display at Petaluma Adobe State Historic Park.

③ ★★★ **Buena Vista Carneros.** The nation's oldest continuously operating winery's historical significance extends to the fact that this is the birthplace of California wine: In 1851, a Hungarian colonel named **Agoston Haraszthy** planted a few vines here. A decade later, he bolstered the local winemaking culture by returning from a trip to Europe with thousands of cuttings of hundreds of varieties, many of which he planted at this winery that he founded. *18000 Old Winery Rd., Sonoma.* ☎ *800/926-1266. See p 139.*

4 ★★ Enjoy a sit-down lunch of Northern Italian cuisine at **Depot Hotel-Cucina's Rustica** restaurant. Its historic stone building, 2 blocks off the plaza, was once a destination for 19th-century train passengers. *241 W. 1st St.* ☎ *707/938-2980. $$.*

From Old Winery Rd., turn right on E. Napa St., then right onto Sonoma Hwy./Hwy. 12. Turn left onto W. Verano Ave., then right onto Arnold Dr., then left on London Ranch Rd.

⑤ ★★ kids **Jack London State Historic Park.** This is where the famous writer of *The Call of the Wild, White Fang,* and more than 50 other stories, lived from 1905 until his 1916 death. In addition to 10 eucalyptus-laden miles (16km) of hiking trails, the park has a number of historic sites, including London's gravesite (a small copper urn), the remains of his burned-down dream house, the wood-framed cottage where he penned many of his later books, the stone House of Happy Walls, a museum dedicated to London's life (with a visitor center selling his books), an old distillery building, and more. ***Tip:*** Pick up the $1 self-guided tour map upon arrival to get oriented. Picnic tables are available. *2400 London Ranch Rd., Glen Ellen.* ☎ *707/938-5216. www.parks.ca.gov and www.jacklondonpark.com. Park admission $10 per car, $9 per car for seniors 62+. Park grounds open Fri–Mon 10am–5pm; museum Fri–Mon 10am–5pm; London's cottage Sat–Sun 10am–4pm (cottage admission is $4 for adults, $2 for seniors, free for kids 11 and under).*

6 ★★ **Angéle.** Finish the day at this rustic but upscale restaurant serving French country cuisine in the boathouse of the Historic Napa Mill, built in 1884. Interior wood gives the restaurant a historic feel, as do beam ceilings and concrete floors. *540 Main St., Napa.* ☎ *707/252-8115. $$$.*

DAY 2

⑦ ★ **Napa Valley Museum.** Though it's housed in a modern building, this museum gives an excellent overview of Napa history. Its mission is to promote the valley's cultural and environmental heritage. You'll learn how Chinese people, Jews, and other ethnic groups contributed to valley life. Downstairs is a permanent multimedia exhibit demonstrating the winemaking process. Before you leave, check out the painting by Michael Keating and see how many winemakers you can spot in it; among them are Robert Mondavi and Joe Heitz. *55 Presidents Circle, Yountville.* ☎ *707/944-0500. www.napavalleymuseum.org. Admission $5 adults, $3.50 students & seniors, $2.50 kids 16 and under. Tues–Sun 10am–4pm.*

⑧ **Veterans Home of California.** Napa Valley Museum is actually on the grounds of America's largest

Jack London State Historic Park.

veteran's home, founded in 1884. It's the home of 1,100 ex-soldiers, most of them age 62 or older. Also on-site is the 1,200-seat **Lincoln Theater** (☎ 707/944-1300), a nine-hole golf course, a 35,000-volume library, a baseball stadium, bowling lanes, and many other amenities. *100 California Dr., Yountville.* ☎ *707/944-4600.*

Continue north on Hwy. 29.

⑨ ★ **Charles Krug.** Walking distance from Beringer is Charles Krug, the valley's oldest working winery; it was founded in 1861 but ceased operation during Prohibition. *2800 Main St. (Hwy. 29), St. Helena.* ☎ *707/967-2220. See p 141.*

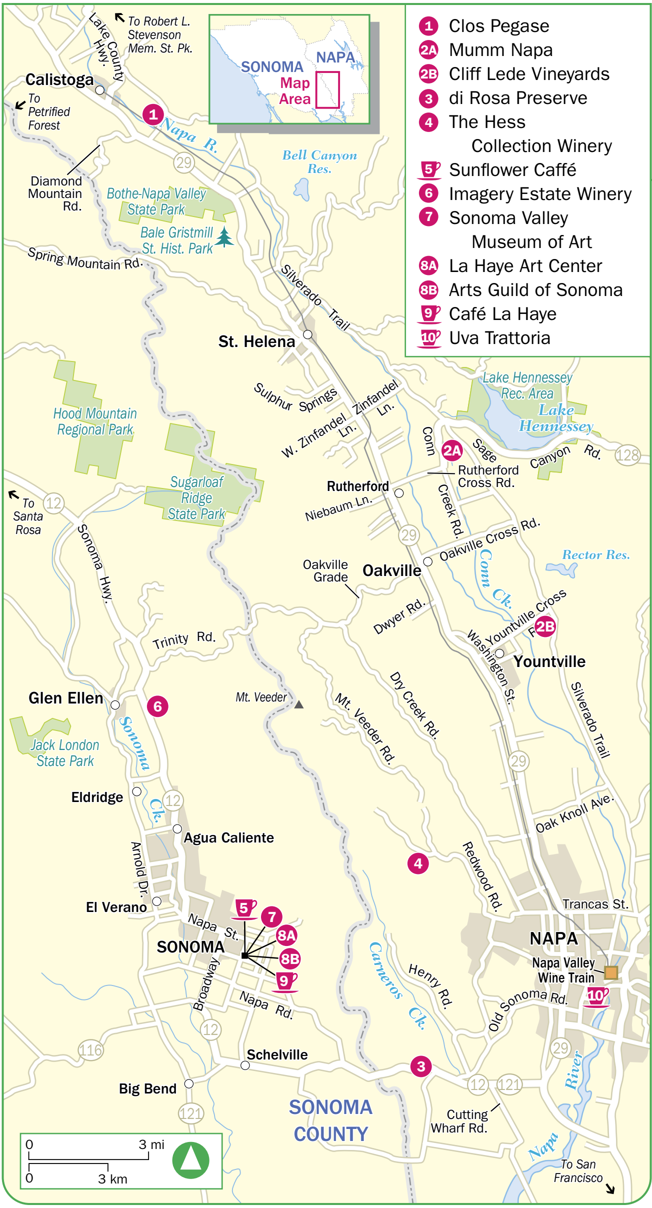
Continue north on Hwy. 29.

⑩ ★ kids **Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park.** This park is worth a short stop to see the massive wooden water-powered gristmill that was built in 1846 and used until the early 1900s. On weekends, watch the mill in action as a miller performs demonstrations, then buy what you just saw being ground. *3369 Hwy. 29, St. Helena.* ☎ *707/942-4575. www.parks.ca.gov. Free admission to park; mill admission $3 adults, $2 kids ages 6–17. Sat–Sun 10am–5pm.* A mile-long (1.6km) **History Trail** links this park to ★ **Bothe-Napa Valley State Park** (☎ 707/942-4575); if you're motivated and have time, take it to see ★★ **Pioneer Cemetery,** a typical mid-1800s graveyard where many Napa settlers, including George C. Yount, are buried.

Now hop back in the car and head back to Sonoma for dinner. Follow Hwy. 29 southeast, turn right on Hwy. 12/Fremont Rd., then turn right onto 1st St north to Spain St:

⑪ ★★★ **Estate** is a beautiful dining room set in General Vallejo's daughter's early-1900s home. *400 W. Spain St.* ☎ *707/933-3663. $$$. See p 77.*

A Day for Arts Aficionados



- ① Clos Pegase
- ②A Mumm Napa
- ②B Cliff Lede Vineyards
- ③ di Rosa Preserve
- ④ The Hess Collection Winery
- 5 Sunflower Caffé
- ⑥ Imagery Estate Winery
- ⑦ Sonoma Valley Museum of Art
- 8A La Haye Art Center
- 8B Arts Guild of Sonoma
- 9 Café La Haye
- 10 Uva Trattoria

SONOMA
NAPA
Map Area
To Robert L. Stevenson Mem. St. Pk.
Lake County Hwy.
Calistoga
To Petrified Forest
Napa R.
29
Bell Canyon Res.
Diamond Mountain Rd.
Bothe-Napa Valley State Park
Bale Gristmill St. Hist. Park
Spring Mountain Rd.
Silverado Trail
St. Helena
Hood Mountain Regional Park
Sulphur Springs
W. Zinfandel Ln.
Zinfandel Ln.
Lake Hennessey Rec. Area
Lake Hennessey
Conn
Sage
Canyon Rd.
128
Rutherford Cross Rd.
Rutherford
Niebaum Ln.
Creek Rd.
Sugarloaf Ridge State Park
To Santa Rosa
12
Sonoma Hwy.
Oakville Cross Rd.
Rector Res.
Oakville Grade
Oakville
Conn Ck.
Dwyer Rd.
Yountville Cross Rd.
Washington St.
Yountville
Trinity Rd.
Glen Ellen
Mt. Veeder
Mt. Veeder Rd.
Dry Creek Rd.
Silverado Trail
Sonoma Ck.
Jack London State Park
Eldridge
Agua Caliente
Oak Knoll Ave.
Arnold Dr.
Redwood Rd.
El Verano
Napa St.
SONOMA
Broadway
Napa Rd.
Trancas St.
NAPA
Napa Valley Wine Train
Old Sonoma Rd.
Carneros Ck.
Henry Rd.
116
Schelville
Big Bend
121
SONOMA COUNTY
Cutting Wharf Rd.
Napa River
To San Francisco
0 3 mi
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Robert Mondavi wrote, “Wine is art. It’s culture. It’s the essence of civilization and the art of living.” The land of viticulture abounds with many art forms, from the visual to the audible to the experiential. Though there’s no way to list every wine-country art venue—that’s a whole other book—this tour gives you a taste of the many creative talents that find inspiration here. **START: Clos Pegase, 1060 Dunaweal Lane, Calistoga. Distance: About 90 miles (145km), doable in a day.**

Photographs taken by Ansel Adams line the hallways at Mumm Napa.

① ★★ **Clos Pegase.** Named for the mythological winged horse-god, this winery’s winning design is the result of an architects’ competition. Its stunning structures house a world-class fine-art collection, including a huge painting behind the tasting bar. There’s also a remarkable sculpture garden. *1060 Dunaweal Lane, Calistoga.* ☎ *707/942-4981. See p 144.*

Take Dunaweal Lane south to turn left on Hwy. 128/29. Turn left on Deer Park Rd., then right on Silverado Trail.

2A ★★ **Mumm Napa.** Explore Mumm’s photography gallery, which displays original Ansel Adams works in long Spanish-style hallways, then enjoy sparkling wine in the glass-enclosed tasting room. *8445 Silverado Trail, Rutherford.* ☎ *707/967-7700. See p 155.*

OR:

From Silverado Trail, turn right on Oak Knoll Ave., then left on Big Ranch Rd., then right back on Oak Knoll Ave. Turn left on Hwy. 29, then right on Hwy. 12/121 (Carneros Hwy.).

2B ★★ **Cliff Lede Vineyards.** This winery’s (the surname is pronounced “lady”) gardens are graced with rosebushes and sculptures by famous artists like Keith Haring, Jim Dine, and Lynn Chadwick. A new winemaking facility opened in 2005, and the former one now serves as a modern-art gallery displaying rotating 6-month shows of the works of rising stars. *1473 Yountville Cross Rd., Yountville.* ☎ *800/428-2259. See p 142.*

Cliff Lede is known for the sculptures that pepper its grounds.

From Mumm, head south on the Silverado Trail, turn right onto Yountville Cross Rd., and follow the directions from Cliff Lede. From Cliff Lede, take Yountville Cross Rd., then turn left on Yount St. and right on Madison St. Turn left onto Hwy. 29 S. At Carneros Hwy./Hwy. 12/121, turn right.

③ ★★★ **di Rosa Preserve.** Rene di Rosa, who died in 2010 at age 91, lived on-site and opened his iconoclastic personal collection to the public in a confluence of art and bucolic nature. He started buying works by young up-and-comers in the 1960s so that he ended up with more than 2,200 avant-garde pieces by some 900 artists, spanning mediums from canvas to stained glass to porcelain—even to old cars. The art spreads from three galleries (one housing a photography hall) out into the 217-acre (87-hectare) preserve with sculpture-laden meadows set against vineyards and a palm-tree-lined lake. There are no identifying labels on or near the art, so, according to di Rosa's intention, visitors have to contextualize pieces without reference to who made what when—though a folder in each gallery makes it clear for those who absolutely need to know. Don't miss the former di Rosa residence, where art is so pervasive that paintings are even hung on the ceiling. *5200 Carneros Hwy. (Hwy. 12/121/Sonoma Hwy.), Napa.* ☎ *707/226-5991. www.dirosapreserve.org. Admission $5. Gatehouse Gallery: Wed–Sun 10am–6pm (May–Oct); 10am–4pm (Nov–Apr). Tours: Wed–Sun $10–$15, free for kids 11 and under, discount for seniors (times vary; call or check website for tour options).*

Head east on Sonoma Hwy. (12/121). Turn left onto Old Sonoma Rd., left onto Buhman Ave., left onto Browns Valley Rd., and again left onto Redwood Rd.

④ ★★★ **The Hess Collection Winery.** Architectural design here is contemporary to match Donald Hess's museum-quality art collection, acquired over more than 30 years, on the upper levels of the 1903 stone winery. Works on display include paintings and sculptures by modern-era American and European artists. *4411 Redwood Rd., Napa.* ☎ *707/255-1144. See p 150.*

Take Redwood Rd. southeast and turn right on Browns Valley Rd.

Hess serves as both winery and gallery.

Turn right on Buhman Ave., then right on Old Sonoma Rd. Turn right on Hwy. 12/121 and make a slight right on Napa Rd., then right again onto Broadway/ Hwy. 12.

5 **Sunflower Caffé.** If you're hungry, fill up on an organic salad or sandwich (or just grab a coffee drink) at this cheerful little cafe. Its owners curate their wall space each month with an eye toward new works by local artists. *412 1st St. W., Sonoma. ☎ 707/996-6645. $.*

⑥ ★ **Imagery Estate Winery.** Each Imagery bottle label is a tiny version of an original painting commissioned specifically for the wine it hugs. Each must somehow incorporate a replica of Benziger's Parthenon (Imagery is Benziger's sister winery). And a curated collection of more than 175 artworks hangs in Imagery's gallery. *14335 Hwy. 12, Glen Ellen. ☎ 707/935-4515. See p 151.*

Take Hwy. 12 southeast and turn right on Broadway.

⑦ ★★ **Sonoma Valley Museum of Art.** Walking distance from the plaza, this excellent institution borrows local, international, and ethnic art of all mediums from private collections, artists, and other museums to create thematic exhibits. In the past, showings have ranged from the somewhat frivolous ("The Art of the Wine Label") to the deeply emotional, like "Faces of the Fallen," portraits of the thousands of soldiers killed in Iraq. The museum has also brought in works by Rodin as well as exotic showings, like textiles from Bali. However, SVMA prides itself on bringing to light lesser-known regional artists. If you're in the mood for hot coffee and a pastry, head to the museum's cafe. *551 Broadway, Sonoma. ☎ 707/939-7862. www.svma.org. Admission $5, free for kids 11 and under (and free for all every Wed). Occasional lectures, workshops, and music performances; check website for schedule. Wed–Sun 11am–5pm.*

Imagery's wine labels are little works of art.

8A **La Haye Art Center.** Walking distance from the museum is this nonprofit gallery cooperative that's open only when artists are in residence, or by advance appointment. *148 E. Napa St. ☎ 707/996-4373.*

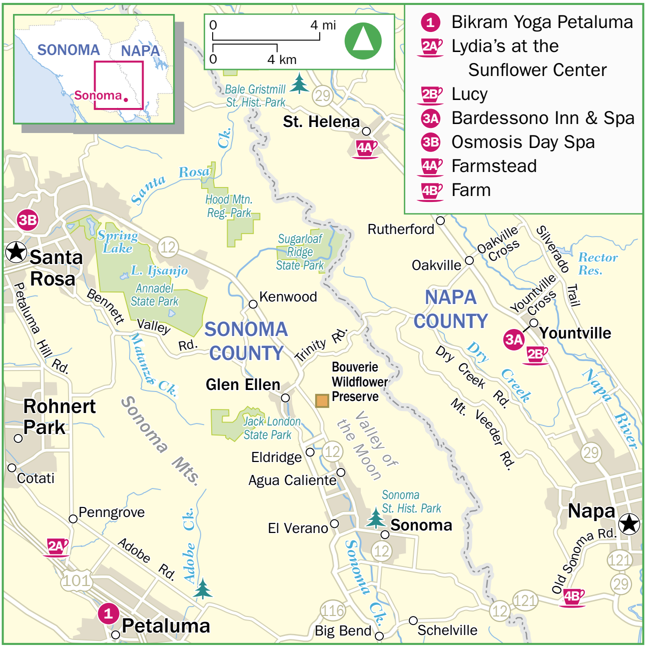
OR:

8B **Arts Guild of Sonoma.** This small, no-frills gallery features mixed-media works by local artists. *140 E. Napa St. ☎ 707/996-3115. Wed–Mon 11am–5pm.*

9 ★★ **Café La Haye.** This self-appointed "place for food and art" is a small but smartly designed restaurant that enhances your dining experience with big, ever-changing works of modern art. Reservations recommended. *140 E. Napa St., Sonoma. ☎ 707/935-5994. $$. See p 77.*

If you're headed back to Napa for your lodging, head to 10 ★ **Uva Trattoria** for after-dinner drinks and live music (usually jazz). Performances happen Wednesday to Sunday nights. *1040 Clinton St., Napa. ☎ 707/255-6646. $$.*

Wine Country for Health & Wellness


SONOMA
NAPA
Sonoma
0 4 mi
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① Bikram Yoga Petaluma
2A Lydia's at the Sunflower Center
2B Lucy
3A Bardessono Inn & Spa
3B Osmosis Day Spa
4A Farmstead
4B Farm
Bale Gristmill St. Hist. Park
St. Helena
Santa Rosa
Hood Mtn. Reg. Park
Sugarloaf Ridge State Park
Rutherford
Oakville
Oakville Cross
Silverado Trail
Rector Res.
Spring Lake
L. Ijsanjo
Annadel State Park
Santa Rosa
Bennett Valley Rd.
Petaluma Hill Rd.
Kenwood
NAPA COUNTY
SONOMA COUNTY
Yountville Cross
Yountville
Trinity Rd.
Dry Creek Rd.
Dry Creek
Napa River
Bouverie Wildflower Preserve
Glen Ellen
Matanzas Ck.
Mt. Veeder Rd.
Rohnert Park
Sonoma Mts.
Jack London State Park
Valley of the Moon
Eldridge
Agua Caliente
Cotati
Sonoma St. Hist. Park
Napa
Penngrove
El Verano
Sonoma
Old Sonoma Rd.
Adobe Rd.
Adobe Ck.
Sonoma Ck.
Petaluma
Big Bend
Schelville
12
29
101
116
121

These two valleys' calming scenery helps make them the perfect setting for a day focused on mind, body, and soul. Get pampered at a spa, eat for health, and expand your physical and spiritual horizons with yoga and meditation. Follow this itinerary to leave the region feeling rested and reinvigorated. **START: Bikram Yoga Petaluma, 1484 Petaluma Blvd. N.Distance: about 60 miles (95km), doable in a day.**

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① ★ **Bikram Yoga Petaluma.** Start a day with a session at this popular studio staffed by well-liked instructors (beginners are welcome). Sweat out your toxins during a refreshing workout in a bright, clean space, then enjoy the private outdoor showers. Classes start at 6am and run throughout the day; drop-in rates start at $16. *1484 Petaluma Blvd. N.* ☎ *707/775-2400. www.bikramyogapetaluma.com.*

From the yoga studio, head northwest on Petaluma Blvd. N., then turn left onto N. McDowell Blvd.

2A ★ **Lydia's at the Sunflower Center.** Don't be fooled by the nondescript office-building exterior. Inside is a restaurant worth your breakfast dollars. All of Lydia's food is organic, vegan, and made from

Relax in Osmosis Day Spa's Zen tea garden after a treatment.

scratch. Try a buckwheat crepe or, if you're more in the mood for lunch, a curry bowl or a nori roll. No wonder the motto here is "Eat better, feel better." *1435 N. McDowell Blvd.* ☎ *707/792-5300.* If you'd rather lunch in Yountville, head to 2B ★★ **Lucy** at Bardessono (see below), where the "garden-first" cuisine comes straight from the property's vegetable-and-herb beds. *6526 Yount St.* ☎ *707/204-6000. See p 93.*

From Petaluma, take Hwy. 101 south to Hwy. 116 east and left onto Hwy. 122, then exit toward Yountville.

3A **Bardessono Inn & Spa.** This shrine to modern luxury is California's only LEED Platinum hotel, so everything is extremely eco-friendly. It's also home to one of wine country's best spas. Release tension with a massage customized to your preferences, or try the reflexology. Treatments are 60, 90, or 120 minutes, and cost between $75 and $295, while packages run $195–$450. The spa also offers skin treatments, ranging from ones that incorporate LED lights to champagne baths ($35–$350). You'll have to travel about 40 minutes from Petaluma to get here, so arrange your day accordingly. *6526 Yount St.* ☎ *707/204-6000. www.bardessono.com*

Or, if you'd rather stay in Sonoma County, consider:

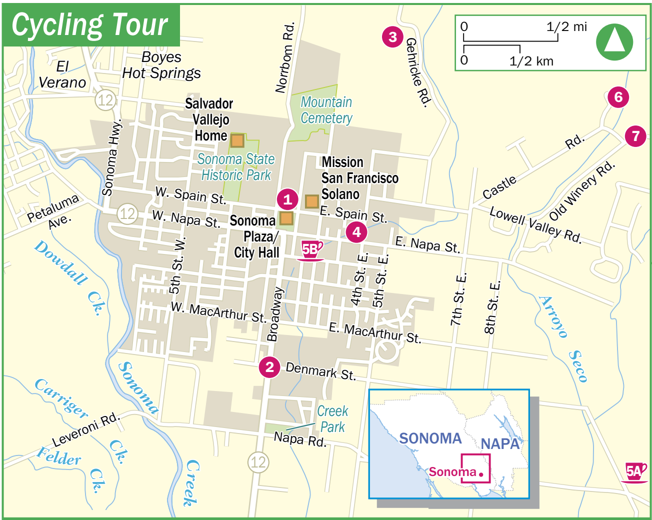
3B **Osmosis Day Spa** is the only place in America where you can experience a Cedar Enzyme Bath, a Japanese heat treatment that's said to miraculously dissolve aches and pains. You can also sip tea in the lush Japanese garden or indulge in a customized facial or Swedish massage. Single treatments start at $75 but packages cost up to $320. *209 Bohemian Hwy., Freestone.* ☎ *707/823-8231. www.osmosis.com.*

From Yountville, get back on Hwy. 29, heading north toward St. Helena.

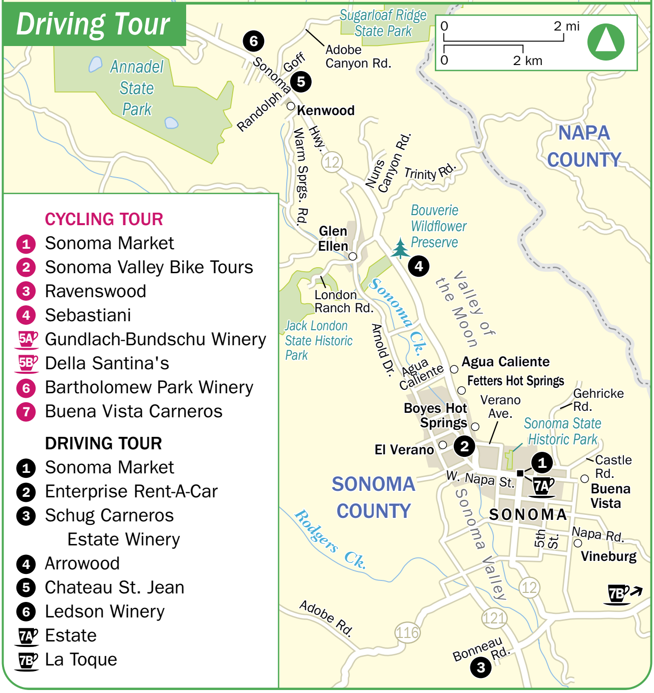
4A ★ **Farmstead.** Finish your day with wine and dinner at this excellent restaurant, which is committed to using organic, local ingredients in its upscale farm-to-table cuisine. *738 Main St.* ☎ *707/963-9181.* To dine closer to the towns of Napa and Sonoma, consider 4B ★ **Farm at the Carneros Inn,** whose menu also highlights the products of organic, local agriculture. *4048 Sonoma Hwy.* ☎ *707/299-49.*

Wine Country for Romance

Cycling Tour


El Verano
Boyes Hot Springs
12
Salvador Vallejo Home
Sonoma State Historic Park
Norrbom Rd.
Mountain Cemetery
3
Gehricke Rd.
0 1/2 mi
0 1/2 km
6
7
Sonoma Hwy.
Mission San Francisco Solano
Castle Rd.
Old Winery Rd.
W. Spain St.
1
E. Spain St.
Lowell Valley Rd.
Petaluma Ave.
W. Napa St.
Sonoma Plaza/ City Hall
4
E. Napa St.
5B
Dowdall Ck.
5th St. W.
4th St. E.
5th St. E.
7th St. E.
8th St. E.
Arroyo Seco
W. MacArthur St.
Broadway
E. MacArthur St.
Sonoma
2
Denmark St.
Carriger Ck.
Creek Park
SONOMA
NAPA
Sonoma
Leveroni Rd.
Napa Rd.
Felder Ck.
Creek
12
5A

Driving Tour


Sugarloaf Ridge State Park
0 2 mi
0 2 km
6
Adobe Canyon Rd.
Annadel State Park
Goff
Sonoma
5
Randolph
Kenwood
Hwy.
Warm Sprgs. Rd.
12
Nuns Canyon Rd.
Trinity Rd.
NAPA COUNTY
Bouverie Wildflower Preserve
Glen Ellen
4
London Ranch Rd.
Jack London State Historic Park
Sonoma Ck.
Valley of the Moon
Arnold Dr.
Agua Caliente
Agua Caliente
Fetters Hot Springs
Verano Ave.
Gehricke Rd.
Boyes Hot Springs
Sonoma State Historic Park
El Verano
2
1
Castle Rd.
SONOMA COUNTY
W. Napa St.
7A
Buena Vista
SONOMA
Sonoma Valley
5th St.
Napa Rd.
Vineburg
Rodgers Ck.
12
7B
Adobe Rd.
116
121
Bonneau Rd.
3

CYCLING TOUR
① Sonoma Market
② Sonoma Valley Bike Tours
③ Ravenswood
④ Sebastiani
5A Gundlach-Bundschu Winery
5B Della Santina's
⑥ Bartholomew Park Winery
⑦ Buena Vista Carneros

DRIVING TOUR
❶ Sonoma Market
❷ Enterprise Rent-A-Car
❸ Schug Carneros Estate Winery
❹ Arrowood
❺ Chateau St. Jean
❻ Ledson Winery
7A Estate
7B La Toque

Whether you're trying to impress your new sweetie, seeking the perfect proposal moment, celebrating your honeymoon, or spending time with the longtime love of your life, wine country is the quintessential place for romance. This Sonoma-centric tour takes you to the wineries and restaurants most suitable for lovebirds. ***Note:*** Before you start this itinerary, the two of you need to decide whether you want to make this a cycling or a driving tour. Then follow the appropriate travel plan below (the biking path is leisurely, mostly flat, and not too strenuous). **START: Sonoma Market, 500 W. Napa St., Sonoma. Distance: Biking: 13 miles (21km), doable in a day. Driving: 26 miles (42km), doable in a day.**

① ★★ **Sonoma Market.** Whether you're biking or driving, stop here in the morning to assemble lunch for later from the deli and sandwich bar. If you order 24 hours in advance, the market can have a boxed picnic, including a sandwich, salad, and fruit, ready and waiting ($16). This market is locally loved for its upscale selection of specialty foods, fresh breads, and reasonably priced wines. *500 W. Napa St., Ste. 550, Sonoma. ☎ 707/996-3411. Daily 6am–10pm.*

CYCLING TOUR

From the market, take Napa St. east and turn right on Broadway.

② **Sonoma Valley Bike Tours.** Sonoma's the perfect place to attempt a bicycle built for two—so rent a tandem bicycle. The experience is even more fun if you've never tried this kind of riding before. As in any relationship, communication and listening are key to doing it successfully. *520 Broadway, Sonoma. ☎ 707/996-2453. www.sonomavalleybiketours.com. Tandem bikes $70 per day. Daily 8:30am–5pm.*

From the cyclery, pedal north on Broadway and turn right on E. Napa St., then left on E. 4th St. Turn right at Brazil St., then left on Gehricke Rd. (2½ miles/4km).

③ ★ **Ravenswood.** If strong wine makes for strong love, this is the place to bolster your affection. Tour the vineyards and cellar; barrel tasting is included. *18701 Gehricke Rd., Sonoma. ☎ 707/933-2332. See p 157.*

Biking through Napa.

Head south on Gehricke Rd., turn right on Brazil St., then left on E. 4th St. (1⅓ miles/2.1km).

④ ★★ **Sebastiani.** The big tasting room might be crowded, but that'll just push the two of you closer together. Besides, after tasting the cabernet, merlot, and Barbera, and strolling the historic grounds hand in hand, you'll both forget all about it. Or you can plan in advance to arrange for a customized private tasting (call for pricing). *389 E. 4th St., Sonoma.* ☎ *707/933-3230. See p 159.*

Take 4th St. south and turn left on Patten St., then right on E. 5th St. Turn left on Napa Rd. and left on Denmark St. (3 miles/4.8km).

5A ★★ **Gundlach Bundschu Winery.** Unfold the picnic you bought from Sonoma Market at any of Gundlach Bundschu's many picnic grounds. The remote hillside tables and the olive grove near a pond both overlook the valley. If it's spring or summer, you might be able to catch a music performance in the outdoor amphitheater (check the website's event schedule). *2000 Denmark St., Sonoma.* ☎ *707/938-5277. www.gunbun.com. See p 150.* If you prefer a restaurant lunch on the plaza, there's a romantic patio at 5B ★★ **Della Santina's.** *133 E. Napa St., Sonoma.* ☎ *707/935-0576. $$.*

The stone press house at Buena Vista is just one of the elements that makes this winery romantic.

From Gundlach Bundschu, take Denmark St. northwest and turn right on E. 7th St. Turn right on Castle Rd., which becomes Vineyard Lane (3 miles/4.8km).

⑥ **Bartholomew Park Winery.** Share tastes of limited-production wines, then explore the historical museum, memorial park, and hiking trails. Or simply sit and enjoy the views—on a clear day, you can see to San Francisco. *1000 Vineyard Lane, Sonoma.* ☎ *707/935-9511. See p 136.*

Take Vineyard Lane, which becomes Castle Rd., then turn left on Lovall Valley Rd. Turn left on Old Winery Rd. (2 miles/3.2km).

⑦ ★★★ **Buena Vista Carneros.** This estate inspires romance with its ivy-covered buildings, antique fountains, and restored 1862 press house, which houses the tasting room. *18000 Old Winery Rd., Sonoma.* ☎ *800/926-1266. See p 139.*

For recommendations for dinner venues, refer to the driving tour below.

DRIVING TOUR

From ① Sonoma Market, take W. Napa St. west and turn right on Sonoma Hwy. 12.

② **Enterprise Rent-A-Car.** Evoke romance-movie scenes by renting a convertible. Enterprise offers pickup service, so if you don't already have a vehicle via which to get to the branch office, it won't be a problem. Additionally, all the gateway airports to wine country have many car-rental counters. *18981 Sonoma*

Hwy., Sonoma. ☎ *707/938-0200. See p 199.*

In your open-top car, take Sonoma Hwy. southeast to turn right on W. Verano Ave. Turn left on Arnold Dr., then right on Stage Gulch Rd. Turn left on Hwy. 116, then right on Bonneau Rd.

③ ★ **Schug Carneros Estate Winery.** In the cozy tasting room, share sips of European-style wines, then stroll hand in hand to see the herb garden, the duck pond, and the spectacular view. If it's clear out, see whether your lover can spot Mt. Diablo in the distance. *602 Bonneau Rd., Sonoma.* ☎ *800/966-9365. See p 159.*

For where to have lunch, refer to the biking tour above.

Take Bonneau Rd. northeast and turn left on Hwy. 116/Arnold Dr. Turn right on Madrone Rd., then left on Sonoma Hwy./Hwy. 12.

④ ★ **Arrowood.** More than 25 years ago, a married couple founded this winery on a hillside overlooking Sonoma. Today, their love for each other and for wine evidences itself in the bright tasting room. After tasting, go out onto the veranda and gaze upon Sonoma Mountain, its valley—and each other. *14347 Sonoma Hwy. (Hwy. 12), Glen Ellen.* ☎ *800/938-5170. See p 136.*

Follow the highway northwest.

⑤ ★★ **Chateau St. Jean.** Romantic in the more academic sense of the word (it has a bit of a sentimental, nationalistic French feel about it, though "Jean" is pronounced the American way), this château provides a nice setting for you and your amour. It includes a fancy visitor center, a small art gallery, and a formal garden with a pond. *8555 Sonoma Hwy. (Hwy. 12), Kenwood.* ☎ *707/833-4134. See p 142.*

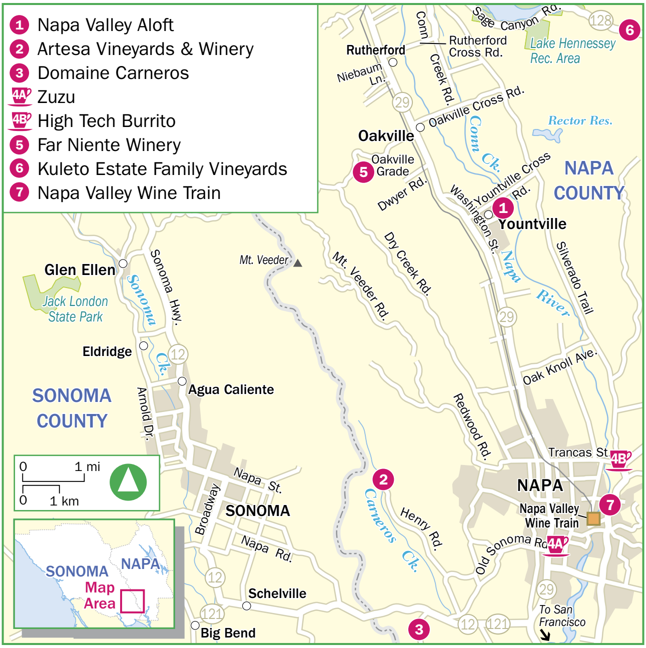
Step through the charming gardens of Chateau St. Jean.

Keep following the highway northwest.

⑥ ★ **Ledson Winery.** Fairy-tale-like architecture, complete with regal gates, a castle, and a hyper-pruned fountain courtyard, is apt to evoke scenes of a prince and his lovely maiden. If you're getting in the mood for an intimate dinner back at your hotel, pick up a to-go meal at this winery's gourmet market and picnic space—and don't forget a bottle of pinot noir or chardonnay. *7335 Sonoma Hwy. (Hwy. 12), Kenwood.* ☎ *707/537-3810. See p 154.*

7A ★★★ **Estate.** One of Sonoma's most intimate restaurants is in an early-1900s Victorian that used to be the home of General Vallejo's daughter. The atmosphere is discreet—and the food sublime. *400 W. Spain St.* ☎ *707/933-3663. $$$.* If you're headed back to Napa for your lodging, consider dining at 15-table 7B ★★ **La Toque,** whose romantic setting complements Chef Ken Frank's excellent French cuisine. *1314 McKinstry St., Napa.* ☎ *707/257 5157. $$$$$.*

Wine Country **Without a Car**


① Napa Valley Aloft
② Artesa Vineyards & Winery
③ Domaine Carneros
4A Zuzu
4B High Tech Burrito
⑤ Far Niente Winery
⑥ Kuleto Estate Family Vineyards
⑦ Napa Valley Wine Train
Rutherford
Rutherford Cross Rd.
Conn Creek Rd.
Sage Canyon Rd.
128
Lake Hennessey Rec. Area
Niebaum Ln.
29
Oakville Cross Rd.
Oakville
Oakville Grade
Conn Ck.
Rector Res.
NAPA COUNTY
Dwyer Rd.
Yountville Cross Rd.
Washington St.
Yountville
Silverado Trail
Napa River
Mt. Veeder
Mt. Veeder Rd.
Dry Creek Rd.
Glen Ellen
Jack London State Park
Sonoma Ck.
Sonoma Hwy.
Eldridge
12
Agua Caliente
SONOMA COUNTY
Arnold Dr.
Oak Knoll Ave.
Redwood Rd.
Trancas St.
NAPA
Napa Valley Wine Train
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Napa St.
SONOMA
Broadway
Napa Rd.
Carneros Ck.
Henry Rd.
Old Sonoma Rd.
SONOMA
NAPA
Map Area
Schelville
121
Big Bend
To San Francisco

Traffic is an increasing problem in Napa, and, hey, you didn't plan this getaway just to sit in gridlock. Besides, if you're planning to try all the wine you'd like to, getting behind the wheel just shouldn't factor in. So let others shuttle you around while you sip to your heart's content. Take this opportunity to see far-apart wineries that are off the main drag and experience some of Napa's best alternative ways to get around. ***Note:*** This itinerary requires advance planning to secure reservations. ***Tip:*** For other non-car transportation ideas (bikes, bus, and so on), refer to "Savvy Traveler" (p 195). For walking tours, see "Charming Towns" (p 67).

① ★★★ kids **Napa Valley Aloft.** Wine country's ultimate mode of transportation is the hot-air balloon. In fact, this is the world's busiest hot-air balloon flight corridor. Northern California's temperate weather allows for ballooning year-round. On clear summer weekends in the valley, it's a rare day when you don't see at least one of the colorful airships floating above the vineyards. One of the best companies providing rides is Napa Valley Aloft. Though the company's headquartered in Yountville, its employees will pick you up from your hotel as long as it's in Napa Valley south of Calistoga. (When you call to make your reservation, ask whether your lodging is within shuttling range.) You'll have to get up before the sun, but it'll be worth it for the breathtaking serenity you'll experience as you float 3,500 feet (1,050m) above spectacular scenery. Skilled pilots double as informative tour guides, creating a highly personalized adventure. You'll get pastries and coffee before the flight and a full champagne breakfast after. Delivery back to your hotel is included to Yountville (but costs $15 to Napa, Rutherford, or Oakville). Reservations are required and should be made as far in advance as possible. *☎ 707/944-4408. www.nvaloft.com. $229 per person.*

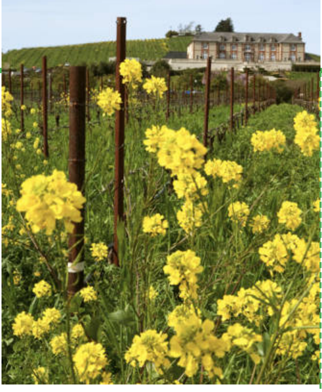
Another reputable company is ★★★ **Calistoga Balloons.** *(☎ 707/942-5758; www.calistogaballoons.com; about $239 per person, including transportation and brunch).* ***Tip:*** When the valley is foggy, balloon companies drive clients outside the valley to nearby areas. Though they can't guarantee the flight path until hours before liftoff, they should refund your money if you decide not to partake.

Plan in advance for a chauffeur to meet you back at your hotel after ballooning. **Beau Wine Tours and Limousine Service** *(☎ 707/938-8001; www.beauwinetours.com)* provides limos, SUVs, even trolleys. **California Wine Tours** *(☎ 800/294-6386; www.californiawinetours.com)* crafts personalized winery trips in town cars, SUVs, limos, and minibuses. **Pure Luxury Limousine** specializes in luxury limos and wine tours *(☎ 707/775-2920; www.pureluxury.com).* See p 62 for more options.

② ★★ **Artesa Vineyards & Winery.** In a limo is a perfect way to visit the spread-out Carneros appellation, and **Artesa** is one of the few wineries directly east of Napa's downtown. A dramatically modern tasting room makes this Spanish-owned winery the "jewel of Carneros." Try the small-lot chardonnay and pinot noir, then explore the **Carneros Center,** which includes an exhibit about the region's history, a winemaking museum, and an art exhibit. *1345 Henry Rd., Napa. ☎ 707/224-1668. See p 136.*

③ ★ **Domaine Carneros.** You can see this French-owned château beckoning you from the highway. Have your driver stop, and ascend the grand staircase into the only tasting room to serve sparkling

Early morning conditions are best for ballooning. Plan on liftoff around sunrise.



Carneros District vineyards.

wines made exclusively with Carneros grapes. ***1240 Duhig Rd., Napa.* ☎ *707/257-0101, ext.108. See p 146.***

4A ★★ **Zuzu.** For lunch, direct your chauffeur to this local favorite. Mini-Mediterranean plates meant for sharing are served in a comfortable, warm, and not remotely corporate atmosphere. Since you aren't driving, indulge at the small but friendly wine-and-beer bar. ***829 Main St., Napa.* ☎ *707/224-8555. $. See p 73.*** For a quick to-go alternative, tell your driver to shift gears toward 4B ★ kids **High Tech Burrito,** a great fresh-Mex chain, then take your healthy, creatively concocted wrap in the limo with you as you head north. ***641 Trancas St., Napa.* ☎ *707/224-8882. $.***

⑤ kids **Far Niente Winery.** Yes, this one's on the beaten path, but it has a faraway feel, created by its stone structure and Southern-style gardens with 8,000 azaleas and 100 ginkgo trees. And just because you aren't behind the wheel today doesn't mean you can't ogle the impressive collection of classic cars in the **Carriage House.** Taste Far Niente's current releases and late-harvest Dolce dessert wine. Appointment required. ***1350 Acacia Dr., Oakville.* ☎ *707/944-2861. www.farniente.com. Mon–Fri 8am–4:30pm. Tours and tastings with cheese pairing ($50) Mon–Sun 10am–3pm (by appt.).***

⑥ **Kuleto Estate Family Vineyards.** Bordering the far-flung (for Napa) Chiles Valley District appellation is this lovely spot for touring and tasting. Few wineries offer this great a view of Lake Hennessey,

Transportation Tips

Limos are the most luxurious transportation option, but they're not the only game in town. You can cab it too: We recommend **Napa Valley Cab** (☎ *707/257-6444; www.napavalleycab.com*). If have your own car (rented or otherwise) but don't want to risk driving it after a few tastings, **BeeDriven** will take the wheel. A knowledgeable local driver chauffeurs you in your own car, following any path you choose (they'll also customize an itinerary for you, should you prefer). And it's less expensive than a limo: Four hours for a group of four runs up a tab of $200; 6 hours costs $300. Advance reservations recommended *(☎ 707/251-0882; www.napabeedriven.com)*. Shuttles are another option, but only if you don't mind not being in charge of your own itinerary *(☎ 707/257-1950; www.wineshuttle.com)*.

Vintage cars fill Far Niente's Carriage House.

such mountainous scenery, or quite the possibility to glimpse wildlife. Appointment required. ***2470 Sage Canyon Rd. (Hwy.128), St. Helena.*** ☎ ***707/302-2200. www.kuletoestate.com. Tours and tastings ($40) 10:30 & 11:45am, 1 & 2:30pm (by appt.).***

Hit Napa's McKinstry Street Depot for ⑦ ★ **kids** **Napa Valley Wine Train**'s 5:30pm check-in time (boarding is at 6pm and the train departs for St. Helena at 6:30pm). Get to the station even earlier if you want to partake in the pre-boarding wine tasting. This rolling restaurant is a leisurely way to see Napa. The nonstop 3-hour journey through the vineyards of Napa, Yountville, Oakville, Rutherford, and St. Helena is a lazy 36-mile (58km) cruise on vintage-style cars finished with polished mahogany paneling and etched-glass partitions. The windows are slightly dirt-stained, but staffers are attentive, if not overly enthusiastic. Dinner's served with all the finery—linen, china, silver, and crystal—but the food itself isn't quite memorable. The point here is the ride, which means that this is a more interesting trip during daylight saving time (it's best May–Aug). ***Tip:*** Sit on the west side for the best views. ***1275 McKinstry St., Napa.*** ☎ ***800/427-4124. www.winetrain.com. Dinner packages $109–$139; lunch packages $99–$139. Boarding times Mon–Fri 11am & 6pm. Schedules are abbreviated in winter. Check the website for special events, menus & tour packages.***

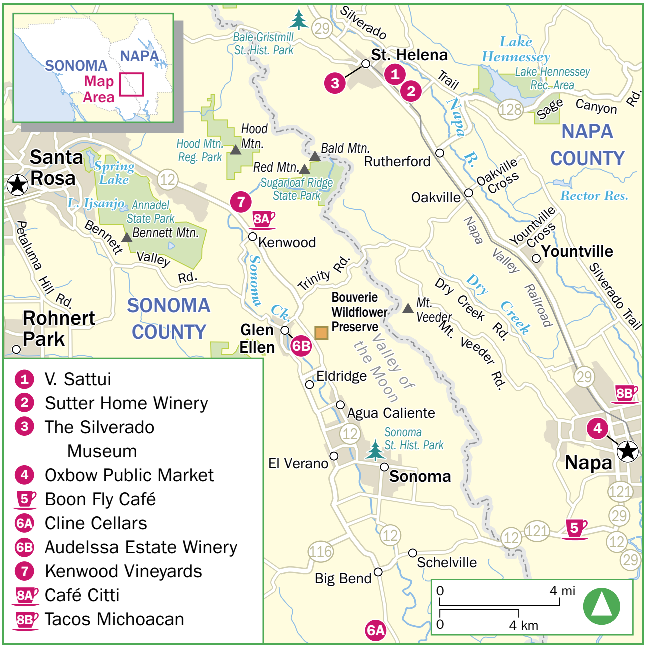
Cabbing It

Napa Valley Cab (☎ *707/257-6444; www.napavalleycab.com).*

Take a ride on the Napa Valley Wine Train.

COME to this world famous wine growing region
NAPA VALLE

Wine Country **on a Budget**


SONOMA
NAPA
Map Area
Bale Gristmill St. Hist. Park
St. Helena
Silverado Trail
Lake Hennessey
Lake Hennessey Rec. Area
Sage Canyon Rd.
NAPA COUNTY
Hood Mtn. Reg. Park
Hood Mtn.
Bald Mtn.
Red Mtn.
Rutherford
Sugarloaf Ridge State Park
Oakville
Oakville Cross
Santa Rosa
Spring Lake
L. Ijsanjo
Annadel State Park
Bennett Mtn.
Bennett Valley Rd.
Kenwood
Rector Res.
Yountville Cross
Yountville
Napa R.
Napa Valley Railroad
Petaluma Hill Rd.
Trinity Rd.
Sonoma Ck.
Bouverie Wildflower Preserve
Mt. Veeder
Dry Creek Rd.
Dry Creek
Mt. Veeder Rd.
Rohnert Park
SONOMA COUNTY
Glen Ellen
Valley of the Moon
Eldridge
Agua Caliente
Sonoma St. Hist. Park
El Verano
Sonoma
Napa
Schelville
Big Bend
0 4 mi
0 4 km
1 V. Sattui
2 Sutter Home Winery
3 The Silverado Museum
4 Oxbow Public Market
5 Boon Fly Café
6A Cline Cellars
6B Audelssa Estate Winery
7 Kenwood Vineyards
8A Café Citti
8B Tacos Michoacan

A budget traveler might not choose a region characterized by splurging and expensive taste. While Napa and Sonoma (especially Napa) are indeed those types of destinations, the budget-conscious can still come here, indulge, and leave without breaking the bank. Here's how. **START: V. Sattui, 1111 White Lane, St. Helena. Distance: 53 miles (85km), doable in a full day.**

① ★★ **V. Sattui** offers free self-guided tours all day. Explore the historic winery's aging cellars, museum, and outdoor spaces. At the deli and cheese shop, there are free food samples aplenty but a wine tasting will set you back \$10–\$15. ***Tip:*** To fit everything in today, take advantage of V. Sattui's 9am opening time. *1111 White Lane, St. Helena. ☎ 707/963-7774. See p 162.*

Take White Lane southwest and turn right on St. Helena Hwy. (easy walking distance).

② ★ **Sutter Home Winery.** Tastings here, which happen in the original 1874 winery, are free. Take a self-guided garden tour (also free) to see the estate's extensive gardens, which were modeled after Canada's **Butchart Gardens.** The organic White Zinfandel garden nurtures 125 rose species. *277 St.*

Helena Hwy. (Hwy. 29), St. Helena. ☎ 707/963-3104, ext. 4208. See p 161.

Take St. Helena Hwy. northwest and turn right on Adams St. Turn left on Library Lane.

③ **kids** **The Silverado Museum.** Dedicated to the life of Robert Louis Stevenson, this one-room museum packs more than 8,000 writerly artifacts, including original manuscripts, photographs, and the author's copies of his own books. Free admission. *1490 Library Lane, St. Helena. ☎ 707/963-3757. www.silveradomuseum.org.Tues–Sat noon–4pm (closed holidays).*

Go southeast on Library Lane to turn right on Adams St. Turn left on Hwy. 29 and take the ramp toward Lincoln Ave. Turn right on Solano Ave., then right onto Lincoln Ave. Turn right on Soscol Ave., then left on 1st St.

④ ★★★ **Oxbow Public Market.** Downtown Napa's main attraction can be as cheap as you want it to be. Peruse the colorful stalls, people-watch, and pick up free samples: Try a bit of the gourmet ice cream at Three Twins, score free chocolate-caramel sauce at Anette's, savor slivers of cheese, and chomp on charcuterie at the Fatted Calf. Still hungry? At Pica Pica, a satisfying Argentinian meal costs less than $10. *610 & 644 First St. ☎ 707/226.6529. www.oxbowpublicmarket.com. Open Mon–Sat 9am–7pm; Sun 10am–6pm (closed major holidays).*

To feel as though you've gone to an expensive restaurant, head to ⑤ ★★ **Boon Fly Café,** whose upscale decor, white-linen tables, and classy California cuisine belie the menu's affordable prices. *4048 Sonoma Hwy. (at the Carneros Inn), Napa. ☎ 707/299-4870 or 707/299-4900. $$.*

From Oxbow Public Market, go west on 1st St. onto Hwy. 29 S. Turn right on Carneros Hwy. (Hwy. 121/12), and turn left to stay on it.

6A ★ **Cline Cellars.** Get here in time to take the 1 or 3pm free tour, or walk around yourself to see the quaint grounds, which include ponds, rosebushes, and the highlight: a small, woodsy museum (free admission) housing dioramas of all 21 California missions. Tastings are

Tour V. Sattui's fancy grounds for free.

free too, and they're doled out in a rustic 1850s farmhouse. *24737 Arnold Dr. (Hwy. 121), Sonoma.* ☎ *707/940-4000. See p 143.*

OR:

From Oxbow Public Market, go west on 1st St. onto Hwy. 29 S. Turn right on Carneros Hwy. 121 N; it becomes Arnold Dr.

6B **Audelssa Estate Winery.** Though this winery doesn't generally show guests its vineyards, its storefront tasting room in central Glen Ellen provides free tastings. Ask for sips of chardonnay and pinot noir, then examine the historic relics and photos documenting Glen Ellen's history—see if you can spot authors Jack London and M. F. K. Fisher in the mix. *13750 Arnold Dr., Glen Ellen.* ☎ *707/933-8514. See p 136.*

From Cline, head east on Hwy. 121 and turn left (north) on Hwy. 12. From Audelssa, take Arnold Dr. northeast and turn left on Sonoma Hwy. (Hwy. 12).

7 ★ **Kenwood Vineyards.** The tasting room here is in a 1906 farmhouse, even though the winery's now a modern, high-production facility (most of it cleverly concealed in the original barnlike buildings). Though this place looks modest, its output is staggering: nearly 500,000 cases of wine per year. Alas, tours aren't available, but free tastes include an array of varietals, including the popular sauvignon blanc, a crisp, light wine with hints of melon. *9592 Sonoma Hwy. (Hwy. 12), Kenwood.* ☎ *707/833-5891. See p 153.*

8A ★ **Café Citti.** The high-quality Northern Italian cuisine at Citti (pronounced "Cheat-ee"), a roadside trattoria, is delightfully inexpensive. Order from the huge menu board above the open kitchen, then grab a table—on warm evenings, the ones on the patio are best—and a server delivers your hearty meal. Wine is available by the bottle, the espresso is strong, and everything can be packed to go. *9049 Sonoma Hwy., Kenwood.* ☎ *707/833-2690. $$.* If you're more in the mood for Mexican (or are headed back to lodgings in Napa), head to **8B** **Tacos Machoacan,** a sit-down version of a locally famous taco truck. Its offerings are fresh, tasty, and very affordable. *721 Lincoln Ave., Napa.* ☎ *707/256-0820.*

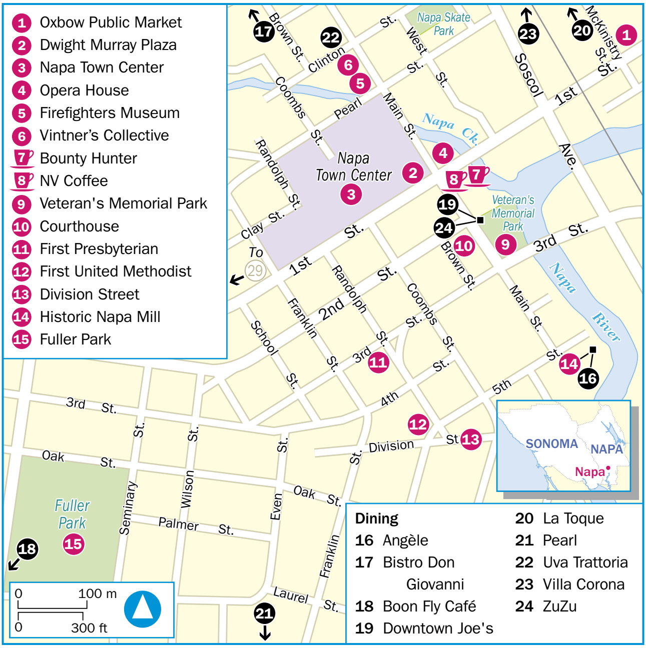
Cline Cellars feels more like a home than a tasting room.

4

The Most Charming Towns

TO SAN FRANCISCO 71 7/10 M.
CALISTOGA
ELEVATION 365 FEET

Napa



1. Oxbow Public Market
2. Dwight Murray Plaza
3. Napa Town Center
4. Opera House
5. Firefighters Museum
6. Vintner's Collective
7. Bounty Hunter
8. NV Coffee
9. Veteran's Memorial Park
10. Courthouse
11. First Presbyterian
12. First United Methodist
13. Division Street
14. Historic Napa Mill
15. Fuller Park

Dining

16 Angèle
17 Bistro Don Giovanni
18 Boon Fly Café
19 Downtown Joe's
20 La Toque
21 Pearl
22 Uva Trattoria
23 Villa Corona
24 ZuZu

Brown St.
Clinton St.
Napa Skate Park
West St.
Soscol Ave.
McKinistry St.
1st St.
Coombs St.
Pearl St.
Main St.
Napa Ck.
Randolph St.
Napa Town Center
Veteran's Memorial Park
Clay St.
To 29
2nd St.
3rd St.
Franklin St.
School St.
4th St.
5th St.
Napa River
Division St.
Oak St.
Seminary St.
Wilson St.
Even St.
Palmer St.
Laurel St.
Fuller Park
SONOMA
NAPA
Napa
0 100 m
0 300 ft

This walking tour takes you through the city of Napa—the town, not the region, valley, or county. The southern bookend to the ritzier towns above it, Napa is the more lived-in, real-life community that caters more to its ever-growing residential population than to its tourists. But that's exactly its charm: Visitors feel invited in rather than pandered to. Plant yourself here for a day, sip a local cabernet, stroll among this riverside town's Victorian and Gothic landmarks, and mingle with locals (or "Napkins," as they call themselves). For more information, contact the Napa Valley Destination Council. **START: 1st & Main sts. Distance: 1 mile (1.6km) of walking.**

① ★ **Oxbow Public Market.** Start your day at one of the town's newer attractions, a marketplace filled with artisan foods and wine sellers. Dine at one of the interesting eateries (**Pica Pica Maize Kitchen** serves Venezuelan cuisine), buy specialty food items and souvenirs, and do dessert at **Kara's Cupcakes** ($3.25 each).

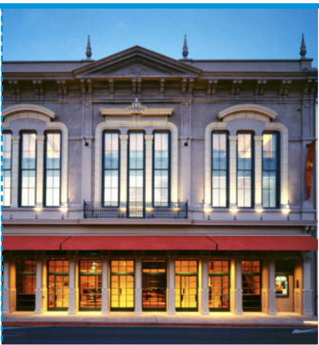
② **Dwight Murray Plaza.** Walk southwest on 1st St., stopping just past Main to this community gathering spot with various shops, a fountain, and picnic tables. Check out

Previous page: A house in the Old Western-style town of Calistoga.

the mural depicting the Napa River waterfront in its early-1900s heyday.

③ kids Napa Town Center. Head to this retail complex to satisfy a sweet tooth at **Anette's Chocolates** or grab a gelato at **Christopher's Fine Foods** and stroll past shops (don't miss the 50,000-sq.-ft./4,645-sq.-m **McCaulou's Department Store,** known for its selection of affordable clothing). All the retailers are housed in historic buildings and connected by a pedestrian street. Look for the two huge oak trees that serve as town landmarks. Here you'll also find the **Napa Tourist Information Center** *(*1310 Napa Town Center. ☎ 707/252-1000. www.napatouristinfo.com. Mon–Thurs 10am–4pm; Fri–Sun 10am–5pm.*)* Stop in for local information, coupons, and pamphlets outlining self-guided walking tours of the town's historic buildings. *1290 Napa Town Center.* ☎ *707/253-9282.*

④ ★ Napa Valley Opera House. Cross the street to Main to see this Italianate-style building. Even if you don't see a show, this performance venue is worth a look for its historic value. Listed on the National Historic Register, it was built in 1879. Some nights, Jack London read aloud to rapt audiences; on others, traveling vaudeville acts titillated patrons. Due to poor attendance, however, it closed in 1914 and sat quiet and dilapidating until local preservationists recently restored and reopened it—to the tune of $14 million. Today, operatic performances are still the minority at this 16-row venue, despite the establishment's name. Management prefers to bring in symphonies and musicals as well as jazz, comedy, and film classics (including singalongs). Occasionally, theatric and dance troupes come through as well. Check the website for showtimes. *1030 Main St.* ☎ *707/226-7372.www.nvoh.org. Box office open Mon–Sat noon–6pm (or until curtains close).*



The Napa Valley Opera House is spectacular both night and day.

Napa's Main St.

⑤ ★ kids **Napa Firefighters Museum.** This small museum is a loving tribute to the history of firefighting. Displays show antique and modern equipment used by life-saving heroes. *1201 Main St., Napa.* ☎ *707/259-0609. www.napafirefightersmuseum.org. Open Wed–Sat (& some Sun) 11am–4pm. Free admission. Also see p 39.*

⑥ ★★ **Vintner's Collective.** Wine discoveries await at this 18-winery tasting room in the old Pfeiffer Building, which was built in 1875 and is Napa's first stone building (touch the native sandstone). After past lives as a brewery, saloon, brothel, and Chinese-owned laundry, in 2002 it became an outlet for small, virtually unknown wineries like Judd's Hill, Melka, and Mi Sueno—in short, stuff you won't find at home. To boot, Keith Fergel (the French Laundry's sommelier, the wine expert at the region's most famous restaurant) named this tasting room his favorite stop for finding new wines. *1245 Main St.* ☎ *707/255-7150. www.vintnerscollective.com. Daily 11am–6pm. Tastings $25.*

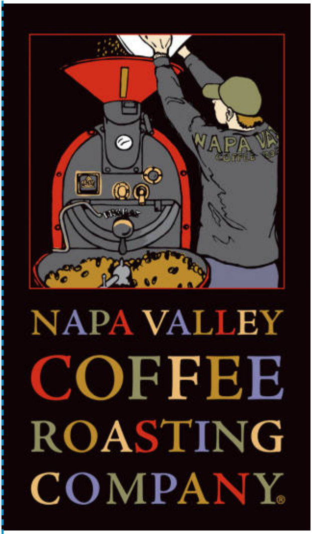
7 ★★ **Bounty Hunter Rare Wine & Provisions.** A combination wine bar/eating joint/retail shop/tasting room, Bounty Hunter has bottles that even devoted collectors would be hard-pressed to find elsewhere. The thinking here is, "Find your own cult wine." Or just enjoy on-tap Guinness with a hearty sandwich. Before walking into this saloonlike space, admire its exterior: The brick Semorile Building, embellished with decorative cast-iron railing, was built in 1888 and is on the National Historic Register. *975 1st St.* ☎ *707/226-3976. www.bountyhunterwinebar.com. Daily Sun–Thurs 11am–10pm (until midnight Fri–Sat). Tastings $2.50–$25 (2-oz. & 5-oz.); $9–$24 (flights).*

8 **Napa Valley Coffee Roasting Co.** For a sweet fix after Bounty Hunter, or if you just need a caffeinated pick-me-up, this roastery in the adjacent **Winship Building** (also on the Historic Register) sells small-batch custom roasts and a selection of pastries. *948 Main St.* ☎ *707/224-2233. $ Mon–Fri 7am–6pm; Sat–Sun 7:30am–5pm.*

⑨ **Veterans Memorial Park.** Savor your coffee on the river's edge at this tranquil park. On holidays like Independence Day and Labor Day, the site comes alive with music and festivities. When government officials come to town, they hold press conferences here. *Main & 3rd sts.*

⑩ ★ kids **Courthouse.** Napa's Renaissance-style courthouse, built in 1878, is still very much a working court, complete with a law library, hall of records, and mediation center. It's on the National Register of

Napa Valley Coffee Roasting Co.



Historic Places for its 19th-century architecture and history—in 1897, for example, this courthouse was the site of California's last public hanging. Explore the first-floor pictorial hall for a visual depiction of Napa County history. On the east lawn (2nd St.), look for the 1893 flagpole modeled after the Eiffel Tower, as well as a Wappo Indian grinding rock. ***825 Brown St.***

⑪ ★ **First Presbyterian Church.** Were it not for its protuberant steeple and ornamental doorway, this pyramidal church, built in 1874, would look like a big rooftop sitting on the ground. It's one of the county's best examples of Victorian Gothic architecture—no surprise, then, that this California Registered Historical Landmark is also in the National Register of Historic Places. ***1333 3rd St. ☎ 707/224-8693. www.fpcnapa.org.***

Heading from downtown into the Napa Abajo District, you'll notice larger city blocks and a high concentration of residential architectural styles spanning the 1800s. The entire district is on the National Register of Historic Places.

⑫ **First United Methodist Church.** This mix of religious and secular architecture done in late-Gothic style is home to an elaborate sanctuary and gorgeous stained-glass windows. Try its small labyrinth. ***625 Randolph St. ☎ 707/253-1411. www.napaumc.org. Labyrinth hours 11am–2pm ($3 suggested donation).***

Stroll riverward on ⑬ ★ **Division St.,** so named because it divides Napa Abajo from downtown. All the turn-of-the-20th-century homes on this lane are historically significant, from the **Hayman House** (1227 Division St.) to the Greek Revival–style **Lamdin Cottage** (1236 Division St.).

Is room 207 at the Napa River Inn haunted?

⑭ ★★ **Historic Napa Mill.** Abutting the Napa River are this complex's Hatt buildings, also on the National Register of Historic Places (sensing a theme here?)—they're good examples of the industrial false-front brick buildings that used to cluster the river's once-bustling wharves. The 1884 building once housed a grain mill (the old tin silos are still attached) and a roller-skating rink. These days, it's a smart commercial center including the "haunted" **Napa River Inn** (p 123) and a variety of shops: Stop at the upscale **Napa General Store, Amelia's Gifts,** and the **Vintage Sweet Shoppe** for locally made non-wine souvenirs or gifts. Notice the exquisite mosaic fountain—its scenes portray Napa Valley's history. ***500 Main St. ☎ 707/251-8500. www.historicnapamill.com.***

⑮ **kids** **Fuller Park.** Take a 15-minute stroll to Napa's first park. Of its 80-plus kinds of trees, many are marked with plaques commemorating important events. Named after Napa's 1905 mayor, John A. Fuller, the shaded park is a great spot to unwind; kids love its fountain and large playground. ***Oak & Seminary sts.***

Where to Dine

★★ **Angèle** *FRENCH* This riverside spot has exciting food and surroundings to match. Its combo of wood beams, concrete walls and floors, bright yellow bar stools, and heated patio is great for intimate dining. The culinary ante is way up there: Think crispy roast chicken with fresh corn and chanterelles or King salmon with arugula salad and heirloom tomatoes. If the chocolate soup's on the dessert menu, it's a must. Reservations recommended. ***540 Main St. (at Historic Napa Mill).*** ☎ ***707/252-8115. Entrees $10–$32. AE, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 68.***

★★★ **Bistro Don Giovanni** *ITALIAN* A bright, bustling restaurant highlighting quality ingredients and California flair. Entrees never disappoint, especially the thin-crust pizzas from the wood-burning oven and the house-made pastas. Begin with the salad of beets and *haricots verts.* If it's warm enough, dine alfresco in the vineyard. Reservations recommended. ***4110 Howard Lane.*** ☎ ***707/224-3300. Entrees $12–$36. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 68.***

★ **Boon Fly Café** *AMERICAN* Along the rural Carneros Highway is a great bargain dining option: the gourmet roadhouse in front of the Carneros Inn. The slick and inviting interior is modern barn style, complete with a corrugated-metal, water-shed-like pizza oven and light, airy surroundings accented with dark wood. The food similarly balances rustic and chic with fancy renditions of comfort classics like beer-battered onion rings and flatbread pizzas. Breakfast options include satisfying omelets and pancakes. If you're passing by and in a hurry, try the tasty to-go items like donut holes and breakfast sandwiches. ***4048 Sonoma Hwy.*** ☎ ***707/299-4870. Entrees $8–$27. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Breakfast, lunch & dinner daily. Map p 68.***

kids **Downtown Joe's** *AMERICAN* Foodies will want to steer clear, but those looking for a good, heavy breakfast, a down-home atmosphere, and live evening entertainment (Thurs–Sun) will appreciate this well-priced restaurant. Beers, such as the tart Golden Ribbon American, are made in-house, as are the breads and desserts. If the sun's out, request a table on the patio. Weekday happy hours feature specials such as $3 pints and half-price appetizers. ***902 Main St.*** ☎ ***707/258-2337. Entrees $11–$25. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Breakfast, lunch & dinner daily. Map p 68.***

★★ **La Toque** FRENCH/*AMERICAN* *Wine Spectator* deemed this one of America's best restaurants. It's known for unrivaled cuisine, warm ambience, a long wine list, and accommodating waitstaff. The acclaimed chef, Ken Frank, uses fresh, organic ingredients in his culinary masterpieces. Try the truffle menu. ***1314 McKinstry St.*** ☎ ***707/257-5157.Tasting menu $49–$88. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Dinner daily. Map p 68.***

★ **Pearl** *CALIFORNIA ECLECTIC* If you prefer to skip the destination restaurants and head for a casual but quality meal among locals, head to Pearl, which has a warm, friendly dining room and a lovely enclosed patio. The seasonal menu includes salads, sandwiches, and main courses. An excellent choice is the soft polenta with sautéed vegeta-

La Toque features a menu of truffle mushrooms.

bles. Reservations recommended. ***1339 Pearl St., no. 104. ☎ 707/224-9161. Entrees $12–$27. MC, V. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sat. Map p 68.***

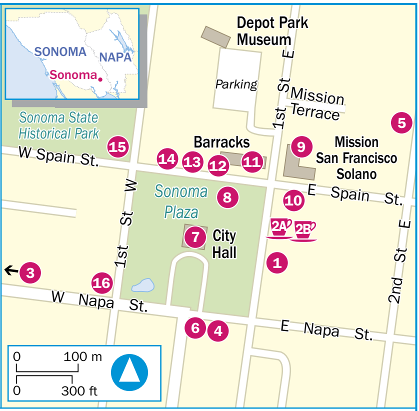
★ **Uva Trattoria** *ITALIAN* At this lively restaurant with a hopping music scene, jazz bands perform almost every evening, making your reasonably priced meal a special occasion. To start, order *arancini* (breaded, fried basil-risotto balls filled with Teleme cheese) and follow that with a gourmet pizza or house-made pasta. ***1040 Clinton St. ☎ 707/255-6646. Entrees $11–$21. AE, MC, V. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sun. Map p 68.***

★ **Villa Corona** *MEXICAN* A funky, colorful local favorite hidden in the southwest corner of a strip mall. Order at the counter, then wait for the huge burritos, enchiladas, and chimichangas to arrive at your table. ***3614 Bel Aire Plaza (on Trancas St.). ☎ 707/257-8685. Entrees $6–$11. MC, V. Breakfast, lunch & dinner daily. Map p 68.***

★★ **ZuZu** *TAPAS* If you've had it with French and Italian fare and wine-country-themed dining rooms, this neighborhood haunt will refresh and restore you. Enjoy affordable Mediterranean-inspired small plates, like tangy paella, paired with intriguing by-the-glass wines and a friendly attitude. Desserts aren't as interesting, but with a bottle of wine and more delicious plates than you could possibly devour, who cares? Reservations not accepted. ***829 Main St., Napa. ☎ 707/224-8555. Tapas $3–$14. MC, V. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat; dinner Sun. Map p 68.***

Sonoma

1 Terra Firma
2A Basque Boulangerie
2B Briar Patch
3 Valley Wine Shack
4 Tiddle E. Winks
5 Vella Cheese Co.
6 Sonoma-Enoteca
7 City Hall
8 Bear Flag Monument
9 Mission SF Solano
10 Blue Wing Inn
11 Sonoma Barracks
12 Toscano Hotel
13 Sonoma Cheese Factory
14 Swiss Hotel
15 Roche Winery Tasting Room
16 Charles Creek Vineyard Tasting Room & Gallery


SONOMA
NAPA
Sonoma
Sonoma State Historical Park
Depot Park Museum
Parking
1st St E
Mission Terrace
Barracks
Mission San Francisco Solano
W Spain St.
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Sonoma Plaza
City Hall
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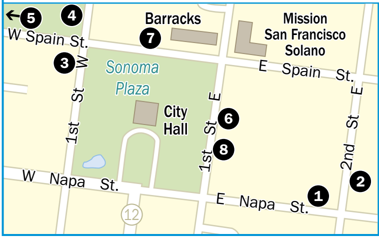
W Spain St.
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City Hall
1st St E
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W Napa St.
E Napa St.
12

Dining
1 Café La Haye
2 Centre du Vin
3 El Dorado Kitchen
4 the girl & the fig
5 Estate
6 LaSalette
7 Mary's Pizza Shack
8 Taste of the Himalayas

At the northern boundary of the Carneros District, along Hwy. 12, is the centerpiece of Sonoma Valley: the actual town of Sonoma, which owes much of its appeal to Mexican general Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo. Vallejo fashioned this pleasant, slow-paced community after a typical Mexican village—right down to its central plaza, which still serves as Sonoma's geographical and commercial center. The plaza sits atop the "T" formed by Broadway (Hwy. 12) and Napa St. Most of the surrounding roads form a grid pattern around this axis, making Sonoma easy to navigate. The plaza's Bear Flag Monument marks the spot where the crude Bear Flag was raised in 1846, signaling the end of Mexican rule. The symbol was later adopted by the state of California and placed on its flag. The 8-acre (3.2-hectare) park at the center of the plaza, complete with two duck-and-geese-filled ponds, might make you want to take an afternoon siesta—but don't. There's too much to see here. Depending on your pace, allow a half- to a full day. START: **Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau, 453 1st St. E. Distance: Less than a half-mile (.8km) of walking.**

① ★ **Terra Firma.** Cross the street to get to this gallery selling African sculptures, paintings, baskets, and ethnic jewelry. It'll make you want to go to Kenya. ***452 1st St. E.*** ☎ ***707/938-2200. www.terrafirmagallery.com. Daily 10am–6pm.***

2A **Basque Boulangerie.** Grab lunch at this crowded little bakery with fresh sandwiches and good coffee. ***460 1st St. E.*** ☎ ***707/935-7687. Daily 7am–6pm. $.*** Also offering exceptional coffee is the tucked-away **2B** **Briar Patch,** which roasts its own beans and shares a quirky storefront with a tobacconist. ***464 1st St. E.*** ☎ ***707/996-7573. $.***

③ **Valley Wine Shack.** This little shop does offer bottles from the valley, but 80% of its wines come from Italy, Argentina, and elsewhere. The best part? Wednesday evening wine tastings cost just a dollar (6–8pm). ***535 W. Napa St.*** ☎ ***707/938-7218. Mon–Tues & Thurs–Sat 11am–7pm; Wed 11am–8pm; Sun 1–5pm.***

④ ★★★ **kids** **Tiddle E. Winks Vintage 5 & Dime.** A treasure-trove of nostalgic paraphernalia. Marvel at the meticulously kept tchotchkes, including authentic college pennants (some date to the 1940s), vintage board games, and old-fashioned candies and sodas. This place is like a hands-on museum; kids love it as much as adults do. ***115 E. Napa St.*** ☎ ***707/939-6933. www.tiddleewinks.com. Mon–Thurs 11am–6pm; Fri–Sun 10am–6pm.***

⑤ **Vella Cheese Co.** This store off the beaten path specializes in handmade cheeses. The friendly staffers are generous with the samples and always happy to educate. ***315 2nd St. E.*** ☎ ***707/938-3232. www.vellacheese.com. Mon–Sat 9:30am–6pm.***

⑥ ★ **Sonoma-Enoteca.** Back on the plaza, a staffer behind this wine bar hands you a sheet listing the day's 20 wine selections, all from small-lot producers; your task is to select six to try. Also taste a variety of olive oils and browse the home-decor selection. ***35 E. Napa St.*** ☎ ***707/935-1200. www.sonoma-enoteca.com. Wed–Mon 11am–6pm (last tasting at 5:30pm). $5 for 6 tastes; $10 with a cheese plate.***

Walk past ⑦ **City Hall,** which looks like something out of *Back to the Future,* and through a children's park, after which you'll see the ⑧ ★★ **Bear Flag Monument,** representing the end of Mexico's rule.

⑨ ★★★ **kids** **Mission San Francisco Solano.** The plaza's crowning jewel, and its reason for being, is this must-see landmark,

Tiddle E. Winks is tchotchke heaven.

STOP
PRIVATE
66

MISSION
SAN FRANCISCO SOLANO

The Mission Solano and its iconic bell.

known also as the Sonoma Mission. *363 3rd St. W. ☎ 707/938-1519. www.parks.ca.gov. Tues–Sun 10am–5pm. $3 admission for adults, $2 for children. Admission also includes the Sonoma Barracks.*

⑩ ★ **Blue Wing Inn.** Across the street from the mission is this pleasantly dilapidated building, commissioned by Vallejo around 1840 to accommodate "emigrants and other travelers," as its inscription states. Notable guests included John C. Frémont (an explorer, general, senator, and presidential candidate) and Western legend Kit Carson, as well as members of the Bear Flag Party—not to mention outlaws and bandits. Admire it from the outside. *133 E. Spain St.*

⑪ ★★ **kids** **Sonoma Barracks.** Don't miss this historic landmark during your stroll through town. *Turn to p 45 for details.*

⑫ **Toscano Hotel.** Built in 1851 as a general store and library, this became a hotel in 1886. In 1972, the Sonoma League for Historic Preservation faithfully refurbished the building and opened it for public tours. *20 E. Spain St. ☎ 707/938-9560 (Sonoma State Historic Park). www.parks.ca.gov. Free tours Sat–Mon 1–4pm.*

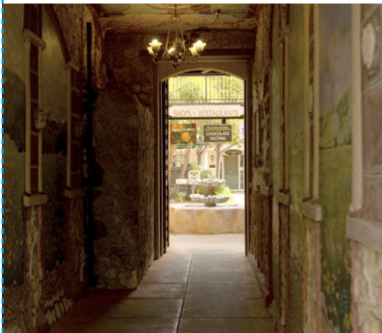
⑬ ★ **Sonoma Cheese Factory.** This huge marketplace, a 75-year-old institution, has more cheese varieties than conceivably imaginable. Many are available for sampling, alongside snacks and wine. There's also a small coffee and gelato bar. *2 E. Spain St. ☎ 800/535-2855. www.sonomacheesefactory.com. Daily 8:30am–5:30pm.*

⑭ **Swiss Hotel.** Built in 1840, the Swiss Hotel was home to Vallejo's brother, a vintner. Though it has nothing to do with Switzerland (the name was adopted from another local hotel that burned down), it's been a hotel and restaurant since 1909. Step into the bar to see a bevy of historic Sonoma photos. *18 W. Spain St. ☎ 707/938-2884. www.swisshotelsonoma.com. See below for restaurant hours.*

⑮ **Roche Winery Tasting Room.** Tastings of current releases cost $5, and snack plates are available. *122 W. Spain St. ☎ 707/996-1966. www.castlevineyards.com. Daily 10am–5pm.*

⑯ **Charles Creek Vineyard Tasting Room & Gallery.** Even if you're done tasting for the day, step in to see the cow made of corks. If you *are* tasting, $5 gets you about six samples—but that fee's refundable upon purchase. *483 1st St. W. ☎ 707/935-3848. www.charlescreek.com. Daily 11am–6pm.*

Explore the town of Sonoma.



Where **to Dine**

★★ Café La Haye *CALIFORNIA/MEDITERRANEAN* Despite its limited hours and somewhat high prices, this tiny, artsy dining room is worth a visit for its top-notch food and wine. The baked almond-crusted goat cheese with roasted beets is a menu highlight. ***140 E. Napa St. ☎ 707/935-5994. Entrees $19–$30. MC, V. Dinner Tues–Sat. Map p 74.***

★★ Centre du Vin *CALIFORNIA* Ledson Hotel's restaurant and lounge has marble decor and a seasonally changing menu. If it's available, try the ricotta-mint ravioli as an appetizer. ***480 E. 1st St. ☎ 707/996-9779. Entrees $13–$24. AE, DISC, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 74.***

★★★ El Dorado Kitchen *CALIFORNIA* El Dorado Hotel's in-house establishment presents exquisite plates in a thoroughly comfortable space. The personalized six-course tasting menu is highly recommended. ***405 1st St. W., Sonoma. ☎ 707/996-3030. Entrees $19–$32; tasting menu $65. AE, DISC, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily (bar after dusk). Map p 74.***

★★★ Estate *NEW AMERICAN* Formerly called the General's Daughter, this turn-of-the-20th-century Victorian house was once the home of General Vallejo's daughter—but there's nothing passé about the all-organic menu and refined decor. An utterly romantic dining experience. ***400 W. Spain St. ☎ 707/933-3663. Entrees $19–$24. MC, V. Dinner daily; brunch Sun. Map p 74.***

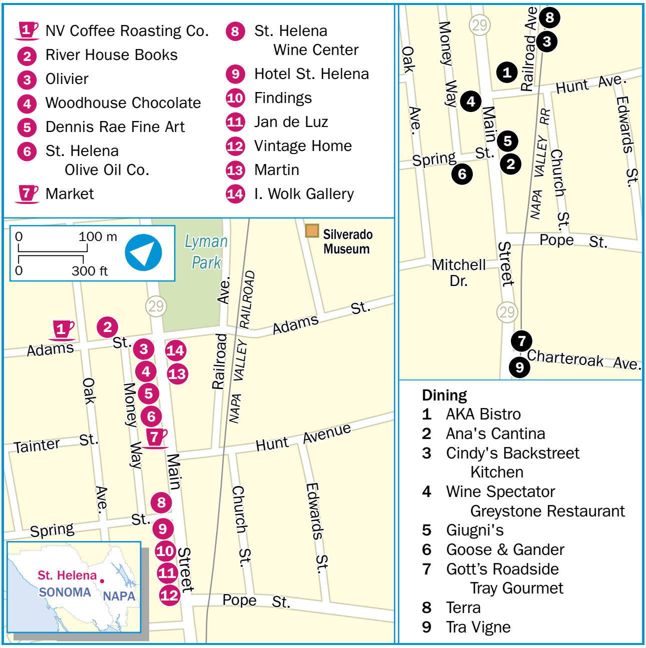
★★★ the girl & the fig *FRENCH* This cozy restaurant's gotten a lot of attention, and for good reason: The food's fantastic and imaginative. After dining, sample cheeses at the *salon de fromage*. ***110 W. Spain St. ☎ 707/938-3634. Entrees $12–$29. AE, DISC, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily; brunch Sun. Map p 74.***

★ LaSalette *PORTUGUESE* One of wine country's only Portuguese restaurants has a pleasant dining room decorated with hand-painted tiles. Choose from a large selection of cheeses and ports for a perfect ending to the inspired dishes. ***452 E. 1st St. ☎ 707/938-1927. Entrees $18–$26. DISC, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 74.***

kids Mary's Pizza Shack *ITALIAN* Belying its name, this place has more pasta and sandwich choices than it does pizza options. Neither is it a shack; its bright, inviting interior is quite comfortable. ***8 W. Spain St. ☎ 707/938-8300. Entrees $6–$16. Pizzas $7–$27. AE, DISC, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 74.***

Taste of the Himalayas *INDIAN/NEPALI/TIBETAN* This friendly restaurant, whose founders are descendents of Nepali sherpas, is a good place to try momos, curry, or tandoori. ***464 E. 1st St. ☎ 707/996-1161. Entrees $11–$19. AE, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 74.***

St. Helena



1 NV Coffee Roasting Co.
② River House Books
③ Olivier
④ Woodhouse Chocolate
⑤ Dennis Rae Fine Art
⑥ St. Helena Olive Oil Co.
7 Market
⑧ St. Helena Wine Center
⑨ Hotel St. Helena
⑩ Findings
⑪ Jan de Luz
⑫ Vintage Home
⑬ Martin
⑭ I. Wolk Gallery

Dining
1 AKA Bistro
2 Ana's Cantina
3 Cindy's Backstreet Kitchen
4 Wine Spectator Greystone Restaurant
5 Giugni's
6 Goose & Gander
7 Gott's Roadside Tray Gourmet
8 Terra
9 Tra Vigne

0 100 m
0 300 ft
Lyman Park
Silverado Museum
29
Adams St.
Oak Ave.
Money Way
Main Street
Railroad Ave.
NAPA VALLEY RAILROAD
Tainter St.
Hunt Avenue
Spring St.
Church St.
Edwards St.
Pope St.
St. Helena
SONOMA
NAPA
Hunt Ave.
NAPA VALLEY RR
Mitchell Dr.
Charteroak Ave.

A first glance of St. Helena (say "Saint Hel-een-uh") gives the impression that this could be a pleasant Anytown, U.S.A. But a step into any of its myriad boutiques, galleries, and showrooms reveals otherwise; their brand of ritziness couldn't be afforded many other places. This walking tour starts just off Main St., then takes you through a foodie's dream. Crossing the street lets you take in wine country's artsy side. Allow a half-day. **START: Napa Valley Coffee Roasting Co., 1400 Oak Ave. Distance: Less than a half-mile (.8km) walk.**

1 ★ **Napa Valley Coffee Roasting Co.** Coffee and pastries fuel you in a relaxing and sunny ambience, bettered by an antique coffee press on display in the back and a communal book swap in the front. *1400 Oak Ave.* ☎ *707/963-4491. Mon–Fri 7am–8pm; Sat–Sun 7:30am–8pm. $*

② ★ **River House Books.** Peruse the well-rounded travel and architecture sections at this inviting bookstore. *1234 Adams St.* ☎ *707/963-1163. www.riverhousebooksnapavalley.com. Mon–Sat 10am–5:30pm; Sun 11am–4pm.*

③ ★★★ **Olivier.** This beautiful French-style store is where to sample a wide array of epicurean savories. The big copper vats lining the walls are actually olive oil dispensers; feel free to mix your own. Olivier also offers bath goods and upscale dishware imported from Provence. *1375 Main St.* ☎ *707/967-8777. www.oliviernapavalley.com. Daily 10am–6pm.*

④ ★★ **Woodhouse Chocolate.** This salon showcases gorgeous handmade chocolates: Try the fan-shaped Thai ginger confection or the brown-butter *ganache* ($1.85 each). These decadent treats in delicate boxes can be shipped anywhere in America. *1367 Main St.* ☎ *800/966-3468. www.woodhousechocolate.com. Daily 10:30am–5:30pm.*

⑤ **Dennis Rae Fine Art.** A small gallery with striking art is a draw for fans of modern or wine-related works. *1359 Main St.* ☎ *707/963-3350. www.dennisraefineart.com. Daily 10am–5pm.*

⑥ ★★ **St. Helena Olive Oil Co.** Between stone walls, helpful staffers guide you through tastings of vinegars, honeys, fruit relishes, compotes, flavored salts, tapenades, syrups, sauces—oh, and olive oils. *1351 Main St.* ☎ *707/968-9260. www.sholiveoil.com. Daily 10:30am–5pm.*

Sample olive oil at St. Helena Olive Oil Co.

ST. HELENA
WINE
CENTER

The streets of St. Helena.

7 ★ **Market.** This long restaurant with a wooden bar and stone walls has helpful waitstaff and playful American cuisine. Try the "Very Adult Macaroni and Cheese" and save room for desserts that'll take you back to childhood: homespun cotton candy (made tableside), s'mores, or butterscotch pudding. *1347 Main St.* ☎ *707/963-3799. Entrees $9.50–$20. AE, MC, V. Mon–Thurs 11:30am–10pm; Fri–Sat 11:30am–10pm; Sun 10am–9pm. Map p 78.*

⑧ **St. Helena Wine Center.** More than your typical wine shop, this one has rare and high-end wines in the back (think Screaming Eagle), unique vodkas (like Charbay's green tea flavor), and tasty liqueurs. *1321 Main St.* ☎ *707/963-1313. www.shwc.com. Mon–Sat 10am–6pm; Sun until 5:30pm.*

⑨ **Hotel St. Helena.** Step into this dark B&B to see the eccentric, almost creepy, decor (old dolls and mounted animal heads abound) and maybe to sip coffee at the small wine bar. *1309 Main St.* ☎ *707/963-4388. www.hotelsthelena.net. Complimentary wine every afternoon.*

⑩ **Findings.** Eclectic offerings combine the antique and the new; check out the jewelry, frames, and furniture. *1269 Main St. ☎ 707/963-6000. www.findingsnapavalley.com. Daily 10am–6pm.*

⑪ ★ **Jan de Luz.** This impressive home-decor store features custom-embroidered table linens, upscale furnishings, even fountains and fireplaces. *1219 Main St. ☎ 707/963-1550. www.jandeluz.com. Mon–Sat 10am–5:30pm; Sun 11am–5:30pm.*

⑫ ★ **Vintage Home.** An inspiring store with distinctive home goods like pillows, linens, candles, and books. *1201 Main St. ☎ 707/963-7423. Mon–Sat 10am–5:30pm; Sun 11am–5pm.*

Now that you've walked the most interesting part of Main Street's south side, cross the street and slip into ⑬ ★★ **Martin.** A true showroom, this lavish store displays everything from art books to large furnishings. *1350 Main St. ☎ 707/967-8787. www.martinshowroom.com. Tues–Sat 10am–6pm.*

⑭ ★ **I. Wolk gallery.** A sparse space with lighthearted art. *1354 Main St. ☎ 707/963-8800. www.iwolkgallery.com. Daily 10am–5:30pm.*

Where **to Dine**

Ana's Cantina *MEXICAN* A friendly local joint with great Mexican food, billiards, darts, beer, and a fun crowd. Live entertainment Wednesday through Saturday. *1205 Main St. ☎ 707/963-4921. Entrees $2–$7. MC, V. Lunch & dinner Thurs–Mon. Bar daily. Map p 78.*

★★ **Cindy's Backstreet Kitchen** *CALIFORNIA/AMERICAN* An upscale, down-home kind of place, this darling dining room presents unfussy yet creative dishes made with local ingredients. *1327 Railroad Ave. ☎ 707/963-1200. Entrees $11–$25. DC, DISC, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 78.*

Giugni's *SANDWICHES* Locals come here for a satisfying bite and an escape from pretense—there's always a long line at the counter. Don't be surprised if you get hit by a touch of nostalgia here: Historical propaganda clutters the walls, and among the grocery items for sale are Cokes in glass bottles and old-time jawbreakers. *1227 Main St. ☎ 707/963-3421. Sandwiches $5.45–$6.45. No credit cards. Breakfast & lunch daily (closes 4pm weekdays, 6pm weekends). Map p 78.*

Goose & Gander *NEW AMERICAN* Taking the place of the much-loved Martini House is this new gastropub with sophisticated cuisine and swanky cocktails. Chef Kelly McCown (she was Martini House's first chef) presents culotte steaks with béarnaise butter and Gruyére burgers with a side of duck-fat-fried potatoes. The lodgelike setting includes black tufted-leather booths and a Prohibition-style lair of a bar.*1245 Spring St. ☎ 707/967-8779. Entrees $14–$26. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Lunch, dinner & bar daily. Map p 78.*

★ **Gott's Roadside Tray Gourmet** *DINER* It isn't every day that a roadside burger shack gets a spread in *Food & Wine* magazine. But then, this outdoor diner built in 1949 isn't your average fast-food stop. Its excellent hamburgers on soft but sturdy buns are known the valley over. Vegetarians need not sigh when their dining companions opt for Gott's: The veggie burger is great too. *933 Main St. ☎ 707/963-3486.*

RISTORANTE
TRA VIGNE

Tra Vigne is a St. Helena favorite.

Entrees $5–$17. AE, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 78.

La Condesa *MEXICAN* With its own take on contemporary Mexican, this colorful cantina mixes local, organic, and humanely harvested ingredients with the flavors of its namesake neighborhood in Mexico City. *1320 Main St. Entrees $8–$38. AE, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily; weekend brunch. Map p 78.*

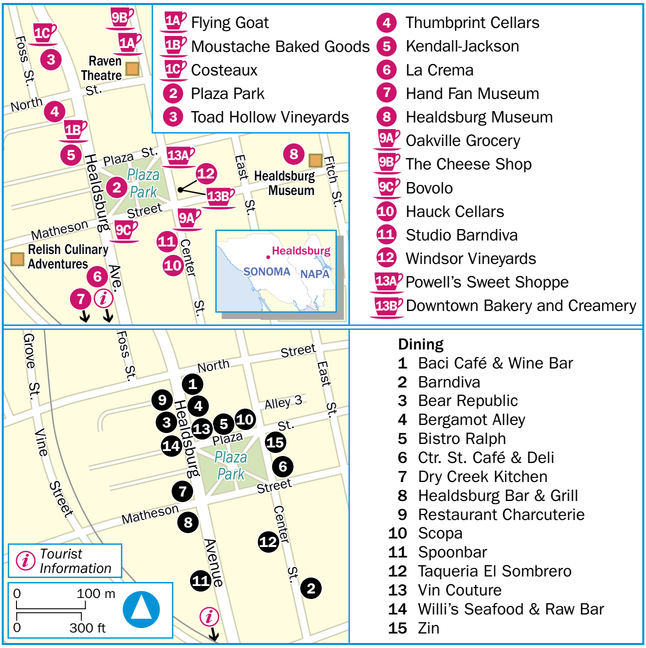
★★ **Terra** *NEW AMERICAN* Terra manages to be humble even though it serves some of northern California's most extraordinary food. The dining room is rustic-romantic with stone walls. The menu, by James Beard Award–winning chef Hiro Sone, reflects the region's bounty and weaves in European and Japanese influences. Desserts are sublime, especially the orange risotto in brandy snap with passion-fruit sauce. Reservations recommended. *1345 Railroad Ave.* ☎ *707/963-8931. Main courses $19–$36. AE, DC, MC, V. Dinner Wed–Mon. Map p 78.*

★★ **Tra Vigne** *ITALIAN* Its combination of good food and high energy makes Tra Vigne a longstanding favorite. Whether you dine in the Tuscan courtyard or in the enormous dining room, you'll be treated to wonderful bread with house-made olive oils and robust California dishes cooked Italian-style. Try the heirloom tomato salad, the daily oven-roasted pizza special, or fresh pasta. Reservations recommended. Adjoining **Cantinetta** offers sandwiches and lighter meals. *1050 Charter Oak Ave.* ☎ *707/963-4444. Main courses $16–$30. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily; brunch offered on Sun. Map p 78.*

★★ **Wine Spectator Greystone Restaurant** *CALIFORNIA* You know a restaurant at the Culinary Institute of America (where students learn to become executive chefs) has got to be good—and is it ever. Watch as chefs prepare small plates, then try them with a new-to-you wine. *2555 Main St.* ☎ *707/967-1010. Entrees $19–$30. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 78.*

Seasonal cocktails often include floral garnishes at Goose & Gander.

Healdsburg


Foss St.
Raven Theatre
North St.
Plaza St.
Plaza Park
Healdsburg Ave.
Matheson Street
Relish Culinary Adventures
East St.
Fitch St.
Healdsburg Museum
Center St.
Healdsburg
SONOMA
NAPA
Grove St.
Vine Street
North Street
Alley 3
Plaza St.
Matheson Street
Healdsburg Avenue
Tourist Information
0 100 m
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1A Flying Goat
1B Moustache Baked Goods
1C Costeaux
2 Plaza Park
3 Toad Hollow Vineyards
4 Thumbprint Cellars
5 Kendall-Jackson
6 La Crema
7 Hand Fan Museum
8 Healdsburg Museum
9A Oakville Grocery
9B The Cheese Shop
9C Bovolo
10 Hauck Cellars
11 Studio Barndiva
12 Windsor Vineyards
13A Powell's Sweet Shoppe
13B Downtown Bakery and Creamery

Dining
1 Baci Café & Wine Bar
2 Barndiva
3 Bear Republic
4 Bergamot Alley
5 Bistro Ralph
6 Ctr. St. Café & Deli
7 Dry Creek Kitchen
8 Healdsburg Bar & Grill
9 Restaurant Charcuterie
10 Scopa
11 Spoonbar
12 Taqueria El Sombrero
13 Vin Couture
14 Willi's Seafood & Raw Bar
15 Zin

Healdsburg is a small town that draws big names and big money. Not long ago, it was just another agricultural Sonoma borough, content to quietly produce some of the world's best food and wine. But word got out about where all that refined alimentation was coming from, and local entrepreneurs picked up on the excitement. Now the town center is dotted with fancy hotels (especially Les Mars and Hotel Healdsburg) and their respective restaurants (Cyrus, which sadly, is closing; and Dry Creek Kitchen), nearly a dozen tasting rooms, and events like the jazz festival each June and the twice-weekly organic farmers' market (p 21). The Healdsburg boom was inevitable, as it's one of the best situated towns in Sonoma, at the intersection of the Dry Creek, Alexander, and Russian River valleys—if you only have 1 day here, your most convenient option is Dry Creek Rd. and (where insiders favor) West Dry Creek Rd. Don't forget your picnic lunch; see the "Picnic Pickups" box. If you have a day to linger in the town center, this itinerary lets you enjoy delicious food and plenty of wine—best of all, if you're staying nearby you can leave your car keys in your room.

START: Choose amongst three excellent coffee options.

Start your morning with coffee and pastries at local favorite 1A ★ **Flying Goat Coffee**. *324 Center St. (7am–6pm; weekends at 8am) and 419 Center St. (6am–1pm; Sat 7am; closed Sun). ☎ 707/433-3599, ext. 205. $.* San Francisco cult brand **Four Barrel Coffee** is served at 1B ★ **Moustache Baked Goods,** where you can also fuel up with cupcakes. For a more substantial breakfast or brunch, 1C ★★ **Costeaux French Bakery** has been a Healdsburg tradition since 1923, with its breads, soups, salads, egg dishes, and desserts. Fun fact: This French-feeling place claims the record for having baked the world's largest pumpkin pie. Look for the 6-foot-3-inch (1.9m) pie tin on the wall. *417 Healdsburg Ave. ☎ 707/433-1913. Mon–Thurs 7am–4pm; Fri–Sat until 5pm; Sun until 1pm. $.*

② ★ **Plaza Park.** Healdsburg's acre-wide focal point is a site of fairs, festivals, and concerts. Find the Olympic flame statue honoring local athletes. On the other end of the park is the 1847 millstone from Cyrus Alexander's gristmill. In between, there's a fountain, plus palm, pine, and redwood trees. There are plenty of picnic benches you might return to later.

If you're not quite ready for wine before noon, skip ahead to the Healdsburg Museum—it's free and air-conditioned! When you're ready for vino:

③ ★ **Toad Hollow Vineyards.** This tasting room is a playful place to start your wine-drinking. Frog-themed everything is everywhere, but the wines served over a river-stone bar focus attention into your glass. A few food items, such as balsamic vinegar, are also available. ***Tip:*** Ask for coupons for other tastings rooms. *409A Healdsburg Ave. ☎ 707/431-8667. www.toadhollow.com. Sun–Fri 11am–5pm; Sat 10:30am–5:30pm. Free tastings.*

④ ★ **Thumbprint Cellars.** A tasting lounge with sleek furnishings, a youthful vibe, and handcrafted small-lot wines, Thumbprint holds occasional events like blending seminars and winemakers' dinners, so call (or go online) to find out what's going on and whether you need a reservation. *102 Matheson St. ☎ 707/433-2393. www.thumbprintcellars.com. Daily 11am–6pm. Free tastings.*

⑤ ★ **Kendall-Jackson.** Gain a better understanding of one of America's most recognizable wine brands (p 152). Your eyes will be drawn to the particleboard floor and the agreeable selection of wine-related merchandise, but the wines will hold your attention at the expertly staffed bar. ***Tip:*** Use your smartphone to find their website's free tasting coupon. *337 Healdsburg Ave. ☎ 707/433-7102. www.kj.com. Daily 10:30am–5:30pm. $5 for 4 tastes ($15 for reserves).*

Cooking Classes & Tours: Relish Culinary Adventures

Game on, foodies. Book these culinary classes and tours in advance, as they have irregular hours. See their online calendar. Book a private course for your group—ask if they'll do the contest we tried, in which teams competed to create pizzas to pair with a wine. Farm tours of the area start at $148. Classes $69–$208. *14 Matheson St. ☎ 877/759-1004. www.relishculinary.com.*

⑥ ★★ **La Crema.** Modern design sets this tasting room apart, as do coastal artisan wines. The winery specializes in burgundian varietals, so try the chardonnay and pinot noir. ***235 Healdsburg Ave.*** ☎ ***800/314-1762. www.lacrema.com. Thurs–Tues 10:30am–5:30pm. $5 for five tastes ($15 for reserves); fee refunded with purchase***.

⑦ ★ **Hand Fan Museum.** Take a break from wine sampling in this tiny one-room museum, which displays a multicultural collection dating to the 1700s. ***219 Healdsburg Ave.*** ☎ ***707/431-2500. www.handfanmuseum.com. Wed–Sun 11am–4pm, or by appt. Free.***

From Healdsburg Ave., turn right onto Matheson St. You'll pass St. Paul's Episcopal Church and its stained-glass windows. A few steps farther and you're at:

⑧ ★★ **kids** **Healdsburg Museum.** Andrew Carnegie donated $10,000 in 1909 to make this neoclassical revival–style building a public library, so its entryway still bears his name. Inside, artifacts document local history, from Pomo Indian times to the town's former life as Rancho Sotoyome, to the squatter squabbles known as the "Westside Wars" to life during wartime. One man who emerged victorious after the land conflicts became Healdsburg's founder in 1857: Ohio entrepreneur Harmon Heald. The museum also recounts the period after Healdsburg's incorporation with photos and period costumes. ***221 Matheson St.*** ☎ ***707/431-3325. www.healdsburgmuseum.org. Wed–Sun 11am–4pm. Free admission.***

Picnic Pickups

You have plenty of lunch options in the area (see below), many with outdoor seating. For picnic fare, you have three solid choices: **9A** ★★ **Oakville Grocery** is one of four stores bearing this name and offers a cornucopia of cheeses, sandwiches, spreads, jams, dips, chocolates, wines, and more, with picnic combos and baskets available. Outdoor tables have misting machines for hot days and a stone fireplace for cool evenings. ***124 Matheson St.*** ☎ ***707/433-3200. Daily 8am–7pm. $$.*** **9B** ★ **The Cheese Shop** is an intimate space just off the plaza that specializes in artisan cheeses from South America. They also carry a variety of local fromage and a great olive selection. ***423 Center St.*** ☎ ***707/433-4998. Mon–Sat 11am–6pm. $$.*** For charcuterie and antipasta, try **9C** ★ **Bovolo,** a cute 24-seat spot in Copperfield's Books that makes everything it sells, including gelato, from scratch. No

Fuel your stroll around Healdsburg with a maple-bacon cupcake from Moustache Baked Goods.

escargot, though Bovolo is Italian for "snail." *106 Matheson St.* ☎ *707/431-2962. Mon–Thurs & Sun 9am–8 pm; Fri-Sat until 9pm. $$.*

Enjoy your picnic at Oakville Grocery's outdoor tables, in the park, or at:

⑩ ★ **Hauck Cellars.** This tasting room features Hauck's Sonoma County Harvest Fair winners, including their zinfandels and cabs. Enjoy wine on their patio, where they'll let you picnic. Call ahead and they'll have a cheese plate waiting for you. *223 Center St. 707/473-9065. Mon–Tues, Thurs & Sun 11:30am–5pm; Fri–Sat until 7pm.*

⑪ ★★ **Studio Barndiva.** If you dined at Barndiva (p 86) and covet the handcrafted art—most a combination of modern and folk—adorning its walls, stop by this lofty gallery space, which doubles as an event venue at night. *237 Center St.* ☎ *707/431-7404. Daily 10am–5pm, or until 4:30pm on event nights. $$$.*

⑫ ★ **Windsor Vineyards.** Watch for the occasional festival or event at Windsor, known for their custom bottle labels. This tasting room features wines from their vineyards in the Alexander and Russian River valleys, plus other labels from the Sonoma Coast. *308 B Center St.* ☎ *707/921-2893. www.windsorvineyards.com. Daily 11am–7pm. Tastings $5.*

13 Ⓐ ★ kids **Powell's Sweet Shoppe.** Even grown-ups will feel like kids in this neon-bright candy store. The term "sweet memories" turns literal here, since Powell's sells candies that haven't been seen since the 1950s. While nostalgic confections define the merchandise, they're interspersed with enduring favorites like bubble-gum cigars, jump-rope-length licorice ropes, and, of course, ice cream. The 1971 version of *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* plays continuously. *322 Center St.* ☎ *707/431-2784. www.powellsss.com. Daily 10am–9pm (Sun until 8pm). $.*

The tasting room at Windsor—how often do you get to walk to several tasting rooms all within blocks of each other?

13 Ⓑ ★ **Downtown Bakery & Creamery** sells legendary sticky buns, donut muffins, fruity pastries, and fresh breads. *308A Center St.* ☎ *707/431-2719. Mon–Fri 6am–5:30pm; Sat 7:30am–5pm; Sun 7am–4pm. $.*

⑭ ★★ **Vin Couture Lounge.** This cosmopolitan tasting room serves up a variety of flavors from a well-edited selection of winemakers. Enjoy a tailored tasting experience or settle in with a glass on the patio. Friday nights often offer live music. *320 Healdsburg Ave.* ☎ *707/431-8161. www.vincouturelounge.com. Thurs–Sat 11am–11pm (Sun until 6pm); open additional days in summer. Tastings start at $22; wines by the glass start at $4.*

Where to Dine

Baci Café & Wine Bar *ITALIAN* Baci's menu stretches beyond its Italian focus (a good helping of pastas and wood-fired pizza) to Kobe beef, short ribs, and other unexpected delights. ***336 Healdsburg Ave.*** *☎ 707/433-8111. Entrees $14–$29. AE, DISC, MC, V. Dinner Thurs–Mon (Thurs–Sat lunch in summer). Map p 82.*

★★★ **Barndiva** *NEW AMERICAN* The philosophy here is "eat the view" because chef Ryan Fancher (formerly at the French Laundry) insists on using only seasonal, local ingredients. The result is food that's remarkably creative and memorably delicious. The ambience, which might only be called "barnhouse modern," is something special too. Reservations recommended. ***231 Center St.*** *☎ 707/431-0100. Entrees $25–$36. AE, MC, V. Lunch & dinner Wed-–Sun. Map p 82.*

kids **Bear Republic Brewing Co.** *AMERICAN* A lively, casual brewpub with appetizers galore, creative sandwiches, and a huge selection of handcrafted ales. Decor includes old bikes hanging from the ceiling and a California-themed agricultural mural. ***345 Healdsburg Ave.*** *☎ 707/433-2337. Entrees $10–$18. MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 82.*

★ **Bistro Ralph** *FRENCH* In this minimalist white restaurant, the ever-changing menu features globally influenced starters, pricy meat-oriented entrees, and a Healdsburg-centric wine list. Reservations recommended. ***109 Plaza St.*** *☎ 707/433-1380. Entrees $13.50–$36. MC, V. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. Sun brunch. Map p 82.*

Before Dinner: Bergamot Alley

While waiting for your table, stop into this wine bar for its arty, lofty space (we like the wheat paste jellyfish) and rebellious wine list (European vino only). Don't miss the old-timey pulley door system on the wine room in the back. ***328 Healdsburg Ave.*** *☎ 707/433-8720. http://bergamotalley.com.*

★ **kids** **Center Street Café & Deli** *AMERICAN* Step in here and be swept back to the 1950s. Whimsical knickknacks and nostalgic what-have-you's are playfully placed all over this big, fun dining room. Breakfasts are delish, deli lunches are made to order, and an old-fashioned soda fountain whips up luscious shakes. ***304 Center St.*** *☎ 707/433-7224. Entrees $4.50–$12. AE, DISC, MC, V. Breakfast & lunch daily; dinner in the summer. Map p 82.*

★★★ **Dry Creek Kitchen** *CALIFORNIA* Celeb chef Charlie Palmer's venture is a successful melding of splendid cuisine and excellent service. Within hip Hotel Healdsburg, the kitchen turns out inspired, well-presented dishes based on what's seasonally relevant and available. ***317 Healdsburg Ave.*** *☎ 707/431-0330. Entrees $25–$39; tasting menu $79. AE, MC, V. Dinner daily; lunch Fri–Sun. Map p 82.*

kids **Healdsburg Bar & Grill** *AMERICAN* This all-American restaurant has a thorough menu for kids and a refreshing on-tap selection (Guinness and Sierra Nevada included) for parents. There's a strong do-it-yourself vibe, from ordering at the kitchen to making your own bloody mary (Sat–Sun).

Thai marinated lobster, avocado, melon, and fresh hearts of palm at Cyrus.

Sporadic live music really gets the place going. ***245 Healdsburg Ave.*** *☎ 707/433-3333. Entrees $8.50–$14. MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 82.*

★ **Restaurant Charcuterie** *FRENCH-MEDITERRANEAN* This small restaurant's offerings start with French staples like escargot, brie, and duck-leg confit and extend to a variety of meats, pastas, and salads. Decor consists of hundreds of piggy figurines, which is slightly disconcerting. Still, service is friendly and there are plenty of other options if pork's not your preference. ***335 Healdsburg Ave.*** *☎ 707/431-7213. Entrees $16–$28. AE, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 82.*

★★ **Scopa** *ITALIAN* This popular newcomer to the square lets you enjoy pizzas and pastas by candlelight in a cozy, brick-walled space. Friendly servers will help you pair the proper wine with your grilled calamari with white bean; or ravioli stuffed with stinging nettles, ricotta, and brown butter. ***109 Plaza St.*** *☎ 707/433-5282. Entrees $14.50–$18.50. AE, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 82.*

★★ **Spoonbar** *AMERICAN* Located in the modern h2hotel, this small, slick space feels like an urban retreat from the small town vibe of Healdsburg Ave. just outside the window. It's a reliable spot for a burger, some fancier snacks (including bone marrow), a cocktail, and people-watching. ***219 Healdsburg Ave.*** *☎ 707/433-7222. Entrees $12–$23. AE, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 82.*

★ **Taqueria El Sombrero** *MEXICAN* This low-key joint, popular with locals, has all the expected Mexican fare, plus breakfast and seafood. ***245 Center St.*** *☎ 707/433-3818. Entrees $2–$10. DISC, MC, V. Breakfast, lunch & dinner daily. Map p 82.*

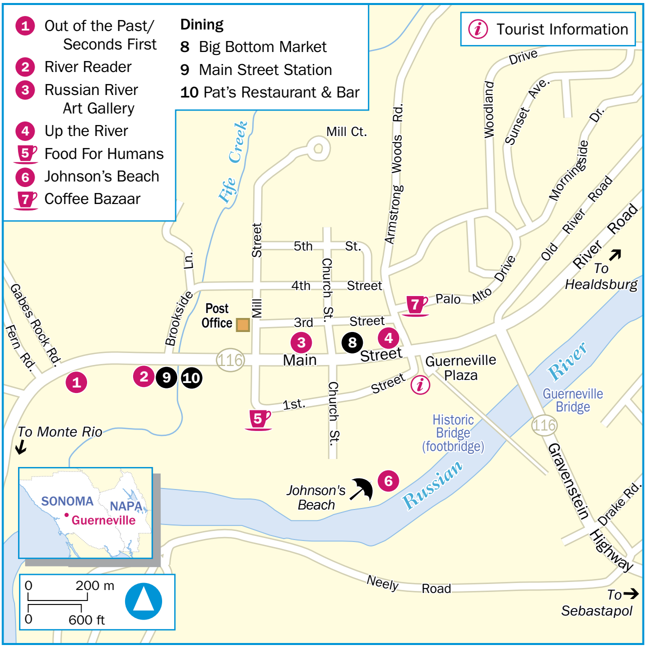
★ **Willi's Seafood & Raw Bar** *SMALL PLATES* An energetic vibe permeates Willi's dining room, bar, and outdoor patio. If you want to hunker down with your own big meal, this isn't the place—but if you're good swapping tastes of fancily prepared seafood like miso-glazed sturgeon, Willi's fits the bill. ***403 Healdsburg Ave.*** *☎ 707/433-9191. Small plates $9–$25. DISC, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 82.*

★★ **Zin** *NEW AMERICAN* With exposed concrete walls hung with big, semiabstract vineyard paintings, Zin is a stylish place to eat. Chef Jeff Mall trained under Bradley Ogden, a fact reflected in his culinary creations. Ask about blue-plate specials or try staples like beer-battered green beans and egg-noodle pappardelle. To go with your meal, order—you guessed it—zin. ***344 Center St.*** *☎ 707/473-0946. Entrees $16–$29. AE, MC, V. Lunch Mon–Fri; dinner daily. Map p 82.*

After Dinner: Raven Theater

The 500-seat pulse point of the town's performing-arts scene stages dramatic and musical performances. Check the website for showtimes. ***115 North St.*** *☎ 707/433-6335. www.raventheater.org.*

Guerneville


1 Out of the Past/ Seconds First
2 River Reader
3 Russian River Art Gallery
4 Up the River
5 Food For Humans
6 Johnson's Beach
7 Coffee Bazaar
Dining
8 Big Bottom Market
9 Main Street Station
10 Pat's Restaurant & Bar
Tourist Information
Mill Ct.
Fife Creek
Armstrong Woods Rd.
Woodland Drive
Sunset Ave.
Morningside Dr.
Old River Road
River Road
To Healdsburg
5th St.
4th Street
3rd Street
Main Street
1st. Street
Church St.
Mill Street
Brookside Ln.
Post Office
Palo Alto Drive
Gabes Rock Rd.
Fern Rd.
116
Guerneville Plaza
Guerneville Bridge
Historic Bridge (footbridge)
Russian River
Johnson's Beach
To Monte Rio
SONOMA
NAPA
Guerneville
Gravenstein Highway
Drake Rd.
Neely Road
To Sebastapol
0 200 m
0 600 ft

A mystical redwood forest enchants you as you make the winding drive into Guerneville. The town itself (say "Gurn-ville," or risk identifying yourself as an out-of-towner by elongating the middle "e") is a throwback to everything small-town America used to be—except for its progressive orientation. Rainbow flags and signs proclaiming "This is a hate-free zone" adorn many businesses—a respectful hat tip to the village's largely gay and lesbian population. Many storekeepers keep their pets beside them as they regale tourists with obscure facts about the area. This half-day walking tour, rather than a hyper-structured itinerary, is more a leisurely stroll down Main St., so part of your fun should be wandering into boutiques that appeal to you in addition to the ones listed here. START: **Where Hwy. 116 becomes Main St., just after the Safeway grocery store. Walk east. Trip length: Less than a half-mile (.8km).**

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① **Out of the Past** and **Seconds First** are two businesses housed in one incense-scented storefront. You'll find oddities like Betty Boop light-switch covers and hilarious fridge magnets, plus peculiar posters and vintage clothes. *16365 Main St. ☎ 707/869-2211. Daily 11am–6pm.*

Guerneville is a small town with a large, progressive heart.

② ★ **River Reader.** This simple, straightforward bookshop has an excellent collection of progressive and alternative literature, a small kids' section, a local-author shelf, and a newsstand with gay-themed magazines front and center. A few ethnic gifts, too. Be sure to give Callie the calico cat some attention; she basks in it. *16355 Main St.* ☎ *707/869-2240. Wed–Mon 10am–6pm. Closed Tues.*

③ **Russian River Art Gallery.** Wares here include artsy jewelry and decorative collectibles. Even if you don't intend to buy, step inside to see the mural depicting the town. *16357 Main St.* ☎ *707/869-9099. Wed–Mon 10am–6pm.*

④ **Up the River.** This card and gift shop sells trinkets, clothing, and small gifts—plus a racier collection of items at the back of the store. *16212 Main St.* ☎ *707/869-3167.*

Veer off Main St. to find:

⑤ **Food For Humans,** a natural-foods market that stocks organic produce, snacks, and eco-friendly merchandise. *16385 1st St.* ☎ *707/869-3612. $.* Buy a sandwich or a wrap, crackers, cheese, and fruit, then tote your picnic down to ⑥ **kids** **Johnson's Beach** on the Russian River, where you can take a dip or admire Guerneville Bridge. There's a kiddie pool, so bring the little ones. *16241 1st St. www.johnsonsbeach.com. Daily 10am–6pm, mid-May to early Oct.* For a pick-me-up after your riverside picnic, try the java or ice cream at eclectic ⑦ **Coffee Bazaar.** *14045 Armstrong Woods Rd.* ☎ *707/869-9706.*

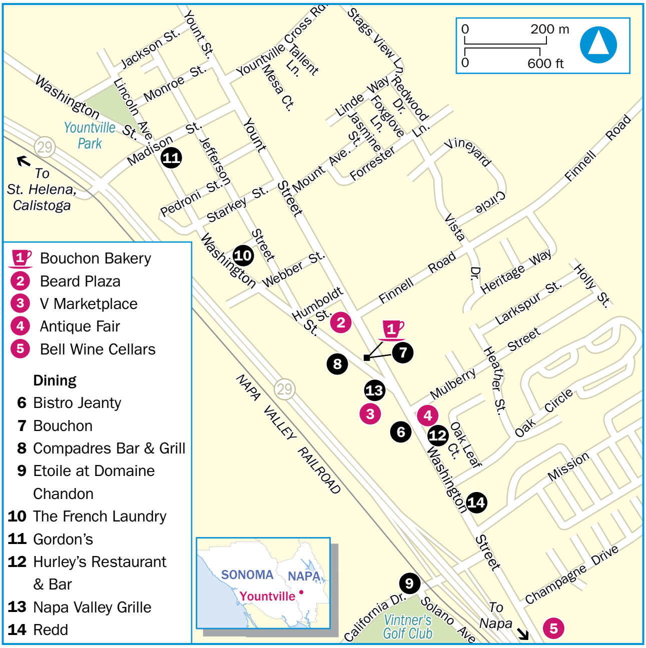
Where to Dine

Big Bottom Market *AMERICAN* Pastries, cheeses, wines, chocolates, and many other delicious morsels await at this popular establishment. Enjoy breakfast paninis and biscuits or soups and sandwiches for lunch. If it's summer, attend the Thurs–Sat "bistro nights," a set dinner menu by executive chef Tricia Brown. In winter, the Wednesday-night "market dinners" are a steal. If you care for a more formal option, check out the market's sister restaurant, **Boon,** two doors down. *16228 Main St.* ☎ *707/604-7295. Entrees $5–$20. AE, MC, V. Breakfast, lunch & takeout Wed–Mon; dinner offered in summer only. Map p 88.*

Main Street Station *ITALIAN* This recently expanded corner restaurant is undeniably upbeat. Menu options include pizza, sandwiches, salads, and pasta. Don't miss the evening jazz performances. *16280 Main St.* ☎ *707/869-0501. Entrees $13–$25. AE, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 88.*

Pat's Restaurant & Bar *AMERICAN* This basic down-home diner has an adjoining woodsy bar. Don't let the tough-looking staff fool you; they're as sweet and professional as can be. *16236 Main St.* ☎ *707/869-9905. Entrees $4–$11. No credit cards. Breakfast & lunch daily. Map p 88.*

Yountville


0 200 m
0 600 ft
1 Bouchon Bakery
2 Beard Plaza
3 V Marketplace
4 Antique Fair
5 Bell Wine Cellars
Dining
6 Bistro Jeanty
7 Bouchon
8 Compadres Bar & Grill
9 Etoile at Domaine Chandon
10 The French Laundry
11 Gordon's
12 Hurley's Restaurant & Bar
13 Napa Valley Grille
14 Redd
To St. Helena, Calistoga
To Napa
Yountville Park
Vintner's Golf Club
29
NAPA VALLEY RAILROAD
Washington St.
Jackson St.
Monroe St.
Lincoln Ave
Madison St.
Yount St.
Jefferson St.
Pedroni St.
Starkey St.
Yount Street
Washington Street
Webber St.
Humboldt St.
Yountville Cross Rd.
Tallent Ln.
Mesa Ct.
Stags View Ln.
Redwood Dr.
Linde Way
Foxglove Ln.
Jasmine St.
Mount Ave.
Forrester Ln.
Vineyard Circle
Vista Dr.
Finnell Road
Heritage Way
Larkspur St.
Holly St.
Mulberry Street
Heather St.
Oak Circle
Oak Leaf Ct.
Mission
Champagne Drive
California Dr.
Solano Ave
SONOMA
NAPA
Yountville

Pioneer George C. Yount, known for having planted the valley's first grapevine, is this town's namesake and founder. Since before its 1855 inception, Yountville (say "Yont-ville") has been a premier winemaking region. In 1973, prestigious French champagne house Moët et Chandon chose Yountville as the site for its U.S. expansion, and Domaine Chandon was born. About 20 years later, chef Thomas Keller bought a small restaurant called The French Laundry. Much of the sophistication that now defines Yountville sprang up around these two institutions—since their establishment, other prominent winemakers and chefs have moved in so that the mile-long walking town is now a simply unparalleled dining destination. When visiting, notice the locals—there are about 3,000 of them, and they range from world-famous chefs to immigrant grape pickers to young skateboarders to patriotic veterans who live at America's largest veterans' home, right here in town. After dark, bars turn lively. This tour is relatively short because tiny Yountville's main attractions are unarguably its restaurants. (See "Where to Dine," below, to plan your gustatory experiences.) **START: Bouchon Bakery, 6528 Washington St. Distance: Less than a mile (1.6km) of walking.**

Hotel
Burgundy House
Lodging
Vacancy

Yountville is tiny, but worth a visit, a stroll—and a restaurant reservation.

Grab a morning pastry at Thomas Keller's ① ★ **Bouchon Bakery.** Buying from the small, usually packed *boulangerie* is an affordable way to sample the creations of America's most famous chef. The confections here are as much a treat for the eyes as they are for the palate, so even if you don't partake, at least gaze at the perfectly laid-out sweets in the glass case. There's no inside seating, so sit outside on a bench or stroll while savoring a buttery croissant, a signature chocolate bouchon, or impossibly fresh bread. *6528 Washington St.* ☎ *707/944-2253. Daily 7am–7pm. $.*

As you walk out of Bouchon Bakery, turn right to explore:

② **Beard Plaza.** The myriad art galleries in this courtyard complex were built in the late 1980s by the Beard family. The works for sale in these intimate exhibition spaces (like **RAS** and **Images Fine Art**) are the creations of talented glass artists, painters, sculptors, jewelers, and ceramicists. Much of the art is modern or wine-inspired. *6540 Washington St.*

Walk southward down Washington and on your left, you'll soon see:

③ **V Marketplace.** This swap-meet-style shopping center is in a historic brick building. The onetime Groezinger Winery was built in 1870 and at its height was California's largest winery. Foodies will want to check out **Napa Style,** which offers cookware and home goods as well as food tastings, demos, and seasonal specialties. Among the other shopping options: several art galleries, men's and women's fashions, a kids' clothing store, and a wine room. *6525 Washington St.* ☎ *707/944-2451. www.vmarketplace.com. Daily 10am–5:30pm.*

Continue down Washington and you'll hit:

④ **Antique Fair.** This gem of an antiques store showcases nostalgic artifacts from bygone eras. Though pricey, seeing these fascinating items that look like they could have come out of a wealthy 19th-century manor is worth stepping in for. *6512 Washington St.* ☎ *707/944-8440. Daily 10am–6pm.*

Walk far down Washington and a bit off the beaten path (consider driving) to:

⑤ ★ **Bell Wine Cellars.** This small artisanal winery has a tasting bar in a warehouselike room among casks and barrels. But the wine's excellent, and so's the company: South African owner/winemaker Anthony Bell is quite likely to come out and converse about the ardent passion he has for crafting each wine he'll have you taste. Reservations recommended. *6200 Washington St.* ☎ *707/944-1673. www.bellwine.com. Daily 10am–4pm. Tours $30 (reservations required); tastings $15.*

Where to Dine

★★ **ad hoc** *SOUTHERN* Waiting months to experience the French Laundry prices not quite feasible? Then seek out an ad hoc solution. With a four-course menu that changes daily, this originally temporary experiment drew in droves of foodies and racked up stellar reviews. Eventually, the talented Thomas Keller had to accept its permanence. Ad hoc also includes an **addendum** out back that packs boxed lunches to go (Thurs–Sat 11am–2pm), along with a quiet picnic area by the lovely garden. ***6476 Washington St. ☎ 707/944-2487. Family-style prix-fixe menu $50–$75. AE, MC, V. Thurs–Mon dinner; Sun brunch.***

★ **Bistro Jeanty** *FRENCH* This casual, warm bistro with muted buttercup walls (and a patio area) serves seriously rich French comfort food for legions of fans. Think tomato soup in a puff pastry, crème brûlée (made with a thin layer of chocolate cream), and rib-gripping free-for-alls including coq au vin, cassoulet, and a thick-cut pork chop au jus. Quality has suffered since Jeanty has branched out to three restaurants, but when the kitchen is on, it's still a fine place to sup. ***6510 Washington St. ☎ 707/944-0103. Entrees $18.50–$39.50. AE, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 90.***

★★ **Bottega Ristorante** *ITALIAN* Celebrity chef Michael Chiarello showcases his signature bold flavors at Bottega, which has garnered an outrageously long list of accolades. ***6525 Washington St. ☎ 707/945-1050. Entrees $19–$39. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Lunch Tues–Sun; dinner daily.***

★★ **Bouchon** *FRENCH* Dark and rich surroundings complement attentive service and a refined menu developed by Thomas Keller. The *gnocchi a la parisienne,* made with wheat instead of potato, melt in your mouth. Don't neglect the superlative wine list. A bonus, especially for restless residents and off-duty restaurant staff, is the late hours, though the menu becomes more limited when the crowds dwindle. ***6534 Washington St. ☎ 707/944-8037. Entrees $17–$34. AE, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 90.***

★ **Etoile at Domaine Chandon** *CALIFORNIA/FRENCH* Domaine Chandon, one of very few wineries that offers on-site fine dining, maintains a classy, conservative restau-

Bouchon is an excellent alternative if you can't get into Thomas Keller's other place.

rant as well as a gorgeous outdoor space. The vanilla-scented kabocha squash ravioli, paired with 1997 Chandon Vintage Brut, is unlike anything you've ever tasted. Cap off your meal with a chocolate crepe made with coconut cream and caramelized bananas—pair it with Chandon Riche bubbly, and you'll leave walking on air. ***1 California Dr.*** ☎ ***707/204-7529. Entrees $15–$30. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Lunch & dinner Thurs–Mon. Map p 90.***

★★★ The French Laundry *AMERICAN/FRENCH* Not much has been left unsaid about what's often called the world's best restaurant. The interior is small and fancy, service is unparalleled, and the food—well, let's just say it can be described in two words: Thomas Keller. The chef's signature nine-course degustation or vegetarian tasting menu changes daily based on his ingenious whims. Book this once-in-a-lifetime experience well in advance—the waiting list to dine here is months long. ***6640 Washington St.*** ☎ ***707/944-2380. Typical dinner for 2: $540. AE, MC, V. Dinner daily; lunch Fri–Sun. Dress code enforced. Map p 90.***

★★ Hurley's Restaurant and Bar *CALIFORNIA* Chef Bob Hurley is passionate about presenting balanced cuisine that pairs well with wine. Here, you get elite food without the matching attitude. The bar, which serves cocktails and snacks until midnight, is a local favorite. ***6518 Washington St.*** ☎ ***707/944-2345. Entrees $19–$28. AE, DISC, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 90.***

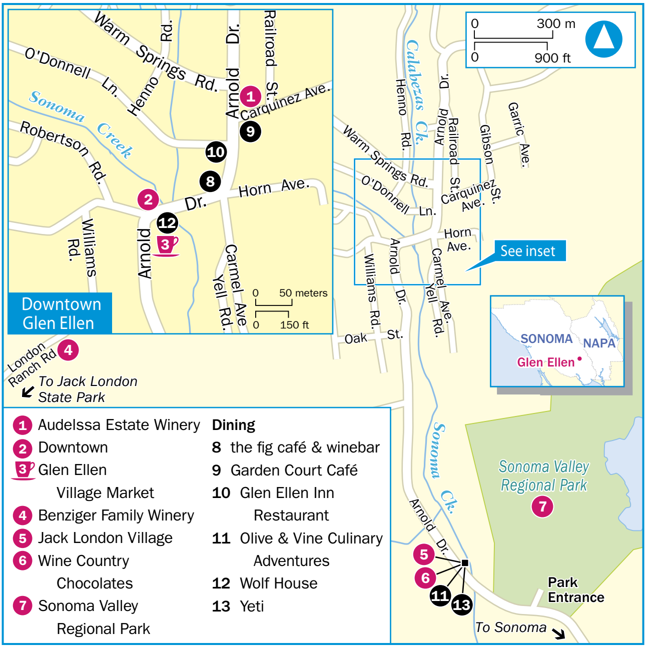
★★ Lucy *NEW AMERICAN* Like everything else at Bardessono Hotel, Lucy is not only exquisite but lots of fun to experience. The servers are carefully chosen and are some of the best at what they do. The food they bring out is so expertly crafted that it'll leave you remembering it for days to come. Try a house-made pasta, one of the sustainably raised meats, or treat yourself to the tasting menu with paired wines. ***6526 Yount St.*** ☎ ***707/204-6030. Entrees $14–$46. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Breakfast daily 7–10:30am; lunch Mon–Fri 11:30am–2:30pm; dinner daily 5:30–10pm.***

Bistro Jeanty is a Yountville staple.

★★ Redd *NEW AMERICAN* Richard Reddington, an alumnus of NY's Daniel and Beverly Hills's Spago, incorporates ethnic influences into his regionally inspired seasonal menu. The dining space is clean and modern with chic accouterments. ***6480 Washington St.*** ☎ ***707/944-2222. Entrees $13–$31; tasting menus $80. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Lunch Mon–Sat; dinner daily; Sun brunch. Bar opens daily at 11:30am. Map p 90.***

★★ Redd Wood *ITALIAN* A casual spinoff of Reddington's original restaurant, this fun new spot in North Block Hotel features sassy waitstaff, intriguing decor, and a menu of oven-baked pizzas that put Chicago (and maybe even Italy!) to shame. ***6755 Washington St.*** ☎ ***707/299-5030. Entrees $10–$31. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Mon-Thurs 8am–10pm, Fri–Sun 8am–11pm.***

Glen Ellen


Downtown Glen Ellen
Warm Springs Rd.
O'Donnell Ln.
Henno Rd.
Arnold Dr.
Railroad St.
Carquinez Ave.
Sonoma Creek
Robertson Rd.
Horn Ave.
Williams Rd.
Carmel Ave.
Yell Rd.
0 50 meters
0 150 ft
Calabezas Ck.
Gibson St.
Garric Ave.
Oak St.
0 300 m
0 900 ft
See inset
SONOMA
NAPA
Glen Ellen
London Ranch Rd
To Jack London State Park
Sonoma Ck.
Sonoma Valley Regional Park
Park Entrance
To Sonoma

- ① Audelssa Estate Winery
- ② Downtown
- ③ Glen Ellen Village Market
- ④ Benziger Family Winery
- ⑤ Jack London Village
- ⑥ Wine Country Chocolates
- ⑦ Sonoma Valley Regional Park

Dining

- 8 the fig café & winebar
- 9 Garden Court Café
- 10 Glen Ellen Inn Restaurant
- 11 Olive & Vine Culinary Adventures
- 12 Wolf House
- 13 Yeti

Glen Ellen, a small and sweet unincorporated Sonoma town, is home to fewer than 5,000 people, which makes it a tight-knit community. Local characters are many, from earthquake predictor Jim Berkland to Pixar's John Lasseter (often called today's Walt Disney) to Jack London's relatives—and, indeed, Jack London himself. Yes, the man is dead and gone (you can see his gravesite at the state park dedicated to him), but he's still very much present—not in a woo-woo kind of way, but in the form of extreme local reverence bordering on obsession. Though some would argue that Glen Ellen's too spread out for a proper walking tour (unlike other Sonoma towns, there's no true town center), it's doable if you're not averse to occasionally walking about a mile along scenic byways. Otherwise, consider driving. This tour, depending on your pace, can be done in a half- or a full day. ***Tip:*** There's not much in the way of streetlights, so if you're going out after dark, know that several local inns supply flashlights to guests upon request. **START:** **Audelssa's tasting room, 13750 Arnold Dr. Distance: About 1½ miles (2.4km).**

One of the stunning views at Benziger.

① ★ **Audelssa Estate Winery.** At the town's first intersection (Arnold Dr. and Warm Springs Rd.) in the 1920s mercantile Glen Ellen Square structure is this small, country-style tasting room showcasing Audelssa wines. Though the wines are good and tastings are free, history buffs may be more interested in the exhibit documenting Glen Ellen's rich past—look for the photos of Jack London and M. F. K. Fisher. *13750 Arnold Dr.* ☎ *707/933-8514. See p 136.*

Jack London's Saloon in downtown Glen Ellen.

② ★ **"Downtown."** What locals call "downtown" is really just a two-block stretch of Arnold Dr. that runs from Warm Springs Rd. to London Ranch Rd. It has about 20 buildings (many of them historic), a few old bridges, a Civil War cannon, and the convergence of the Sonoma and Calabasas creeks. The heyday here was about a century ago when trains brought in tourists. Still, the town hasn't changed much since the days when Jack London lived, wrote, and farmed nearby—it got its first traffic light in 2006 and still has virtually no sidewalks.

3 ★ **Glen Ellen Village Market.** This very gourmet market (without the gourmet attitude) has hot and cold cases, delicious panini, a fabulous salad bar alongside an impressive produce section, and an excellent wine and cheese selection. Snack here or stock up on supplies for a picnic at **Sonoma Valley Regional Park.** *13751 Arnold Dr.* ☎ *707/996-6728. Daily 6am–9pm.*

Walk about a mile (1.6km) uphill on London Ranch Rd.

④ ★★ **kids** **Benziger Family Winery.** Known for having the valley's best tour (it draws tourists around by tractor, for heaven's sake), this biodynamic winery is one of the region's most welcoming. *1883 London Ranch Rd.* ☎ *888/490-2739. See p 138.*

Walk or drive another half-mile (.8km) up London Ranch Rd.

⑤ ★ **Jack London Village.** This quaint little shopping spot houses an eclectic selection of restaurants and small shops, including a cheesemonger, the **Eric Ross Winery** tasting room, and a chocolate tasting room (see below). *14301 Arnold Dr.*

⑥ **Wine Country Chocolates.** Wine tastings abound in wine country but *chocolate* tastings offer a new twist. Stop in to sample a variety of truffle flavors or try different percentages of cacao content. If you aren't into tasting, peek through the kitchen window and marvel at the chocolatiers as they mix their magic. *14301 Arnold Dr., No. 1.* ☎ *707/996-1010. www.winecountrychocolates.com. Free tasting bar daily 10am–5pm.*

Just past the Jack London Village and across Calabasas Creek is an entrance to:

⑦ **Sonoma Valley Regional Park.** This 162-acre (65-hectare) park has beautiful biking and walking paths, easy hiking trails (some paved and some dirt), and a fenced dog park. It's most beautiful in spring, when the wildflowers bloom, but fall's magnificent colors, just before the oaks shed their leaves, rank a close second. There's a pretty picnic and lawn area at the trail head. *13630 Sonoma Hwy.* ☎ *707/565-2041. www.sonoma-county.org/parks. Open daily sunrise –sunset. Parking $6.*

Where to Dine

★★ **the fig café & winebar** *CALIFORNIA/MEDITERRANEAN* The sister restaurant of the girl & the fig (p 94)—which also refuses to capitalize its name—is more casual than its Sonoma Plaza sibling, but don't let the rustic neighborhood vibe fool you. The plates that come out of the open kitchen represent the kind of sophistication more commonly associated with upscale urban restaurants. Start with a thin-crust pizza, a cheese plate, or the signature fig and arugula salad, and end with the lavender crème brûlée. A huge perk here is the lack of a corkage fee, so bring along a bottle. Wine's also available by the flight, glass, or bottle, and there's a nice list to choose from. Reservations not accepted. *13690 Arnold Dr.* ☎ *707/938-2130. Entrees $10–$19. AE, DISC, MC, V. Dinner daily; brunch Sat & Sun only. Map p 94.*

kids **Garden Court Café** *AMERICAN* A sunny, genial place with savory breakfasts and lunches, Sonoma wines, and occasional special Friday-night dinners. At breakfast, order eggs done any which way. Lunch offerings consist mostly of sandwiches and salads. There's a pet-friendly umbrella-shaded terrace outside, and you can order your dog a meal off a three-option menu. *13647 Arnold Dr.* ☎ *707/935-1565. Entrees $8–$13. MC, V. Breakfast & lunch Wed–Mon. Map p 94.*

★★ **Glen Ellen Inn Restaurant** *CALIFORNIA/FRENCH* A locals' favorite for its warm, romantic atmosphere. The beautiful presentations that emerge from the open kitchen change with the seasons. Garden seating is the favorable choice on sunny days but the cov-

Glen Ellen's the fig café & winebar is the casual version of the famous Sonoma restaurant, the girl & the fig (p 96).

ered patio is also welcoming. The 550-selection wine list includes more than a dozen wines by the glass. For dessert, try the fabulous house-made sundae: coconut-encrusted French-vanilla ice-cream floats in bittersweet caramel sauce. Reservations recommended. ***Tip:*** There's a small parking lot behind the restaurant. *13670 Arnold Dr.* ☎ *707/996-6409. Main courses $11–$25. AE, DISC, MC, V. Lunch & dinner Thurs–Tue; dinner Wed. Map p 94.*

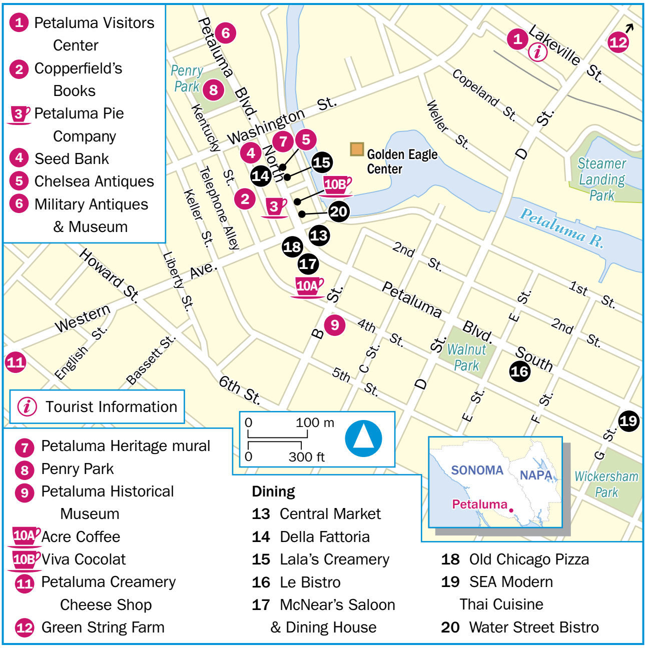
Olive & Vine Culinary Adventures *CALIFORNIA* This pretty cafe-deli has a small sit-down area but most of its business comes from its extensive catering offerings, so to-go picnics and box lunches ($14–$16) are superb. Offerings also include simple breakfasts (mostly pastries), coffee options, and wine tasting. *In Jack London Village. 14301 Arnold Dr.* ☎ *707/996-9150. Entrees $10–$15. MC, V. Breakfast & lunch Wed–Mon. Map p 94.*

★★ **Wolf House** *NEW AMERICAN* One of Glen Ellen's most famous establishments, in Jack London Lodge, serves food in a saloon or out on the terrace, which overlooks a serene creek. The lunch menu adds fancy flourishes to old American favorites, while dinners emphasize locally procured ingredients, some even culled from the Lodge's garden. A reasonably priced Sonoma-centric wine list offers many by-the-glass options. After dinner, head to the Lodge's fun saloon, which is filled with colorful folks, TVs broadcasting sports games, and Jack London photos and memorabilia. *13740 Arnold Dr.* ☎ *707/996-4401. Entrees $15–$27. AE, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Reservations recommended. Map p 94.*

Yeti *INDIAN/PAKISTANI* For a taste of the Himalayas in one of wine country's tinier towns, Yeti doesn't disappoint. Sit indoors to watch Chef Narayan Somname work his magic behind the long bar, or enjoy a view of Sonoma Creek from the large outdoor patio. The succulent, authentic dishes are reasonably priced. *14301 Arnold Dr.* ☎ *707/996-9930. AE, DISC, MC, V. Entrees $15–$20. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 94.*

At Glen Ellen Inn, a burger is seared, tiered, and speared.

Petaluma


Petaluma Blvd.
Penry Park
Kentucky St.
Washington St.
North
Golden Eagle Center
Copeland St.
Weller St.
Lakeville St.
D St.
Steamer Landing Park
Petaluma R.
Telephone Alley
Keller St.
Liberty St.
Howard St.
Western Ave.
English St.
Bassett St.
6th St.
2nd St.
Petaluma Blvd. South
B St.
4th St.
C St.
5th St.
D St.
Walnut Park
E St.
1st St.
2nd St.
F St.
G St.
Wickersham Park
100 m
300 ft
SONOMA
NAPA
Petaluma

① Petaluma Visitors Center
② Copperfield's Books
3 Petaluma Pie Company
④ Seed Bank
⑤ Chelsea Antiques
⑥ Military Antiques & Museum

ⓘ Tourist Information

⑦ Petaluma Heritage mural
⑧ Penry Park
⑨ Petaluma Historical Museum
10A Acre Coffee
10B Viva Cocolat
⑪ Petaluma Creamery Cheese Shop
⑫ Green String Farm

Dining

13 Central Market
14 Della Fattoria
15 Lala's Creamery
16 Le Bistro
17 McNear's Saloon & Dining House
18 Old Chicago Pizza
19 SEA Modern Thai Cuisine
20 Water Street Bistro

Petaluma's not on the typical traveler's Napa-Sonoma itinerary—but it should be. This town doesn't put on fancy airs but is rife with hidden treasures, not the least of which is its soft-spoken devotion to excellent food. Agriculture, especially dairy, is Petaluma's mainstay industry—its Butter & Egg Days festival (usually end of Apr) is such a big deal that it brings those who grew up here back to town. Chartered in 1858, Petaluma is also as historic as it gets in California. And because it sits on bedrock, the 1906 earthquake that flattened San Francisco and the rest of this region just couldn't shake Petaluma down. The people here seem just as sturdy: They're friendly, matter-of-fact folk who say "hello" in the street—not something you find everywhere in California. This tour blends walking and driving to give you a thorough overview. **START: Petaluma Visitors Center, 210 Lakeville Hwy. Distance: Less than 1 mile (1.6 km) of walking, about 6 miles (10km) of driving.**

① **Petaluma Visitors Center.** If you're into local lore, make this your first stop as you drive into town—the docents staffing this little outpost are knowledgeable and talkative. *210 Lakeville Hwy. (Hwy. 116). ☎ 707/283-0528. www.visitpetaluma.com. Daily 10am–4pm.*

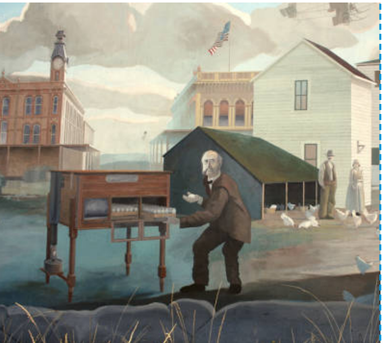
Drive northwest on Lakeville St. to turn left onto E. Washington St. Drive half a mile, then turn left onto Keller St. On your right will be a free parking structure. Park here, then walk across the street to:

② ★ **Copperfield's Books.** Copperfield's is an excellent reminder of why bookshops are still important. This comfortable, homey store has a useful "local interest" shelf and a wanderlust-inducing travel section. *140 Kentucky St. ☎ 707/762-0563. www.copperfieldsbooks.com. Mon–Sat 10am–9pm; Sun 10am–6pm.*

3 **Petaluma Pie Company.** In Helen Putnam Plaza, this small store serves sweet and savory pies in traditional flavors like strawberry rhubarb and chicken pot—but also offers a creative selection for adventurous palates, like pear-cardamom or a handheld samosa. Ingredients are mostly organic and sourced from local food producers. *125 Petaluma Blvd. N. ☎ 707/766-6743. Closed Tues. $.*

④ ★★★ **kids** **Seed Bank.** Even non-gardeners marvel at the vastness of the selection here: Nearly 1,300 seed types are for sale in an almost library-like arrangement. A kind, knowledgeable staff stands ready to answer any questions. *199 Petaluma Blvd. N. ☎ 707/773-1336. www.rareseeds.com. Mon–Fri 9am–4pm; Sun 9:30am–4pm. Closed Sat and major holidays. Extended hours during summer.*

Steve Della Maggiora's 1998 mural depicting Petaluma's history includes Lyman Bryce, coinventor of the egg incubator in 1875.



⑤ ★ **Chelsea Antiques.** Browse the country-style Americana in this charming collective featuring the finds of 25 dealers. *148 Petaluma Blvd. N. ☎ 707/763-7686. Daily 10am–5:30pm.*

⑥ ★★ **Military Antiques & Museum.** To get to the museum, walk into the storefront of the **Petaluma Collective,** a cluttered store of collectible kitsch: A quizzical group of vintage robots (and a friendly staff) may greet you at the door. Head downstairs, and the wares turn entirely war-themed. You feel almost as though you're descending into a bunker as a passionate docent leads you into the museum. Prepare to be regaled with untold stories spanning the Civil War through World War II, and to see evocative scenes patched together with some of the thousands of artifacts given to the museum by veterans who tell of their wartime experiences. *300 Petaluma Blvd. N. ☎ 707/763-2220. www.militaryantiquesmuseum.com. Thurs–Sun 10am–5:30pm or by appt.*

⑦ **"Petaluma Heritage" mural.** Stop for a look at this 100-foot-long (30m) mural, which artist Steve Della Maggiora created in 1998 as a visual timeline of the town. To the far left are the Miwok Native Americans, then General Vallejo and his adobe, followed by horse wagons, seafaring men (this *is* a river town, after all), a steam train—and, of course, chickens, eggs, and cows. *Petaluma Blvd. at E. Washington St.*

⑧ **kids** **Penry Park.** This 1¼-acre hilltop green space is named for U.S. Army sergeant Richard A. Penry. In late 2011, the “Occupy” movement set up camp here. The protesters are gone now, so it’s a peaceful place for a picnic lunch amid the fan palms. The park also provides a decent view of Petaluma’s typical Victorian homes. ***Petaluma Blvd. at E. Washington St.***

⑨ ★ **Petaluma Historical Museum.** Housed in a 1903 Greco-Roman-looking building that used to do duty as a Carnegie library, this Smithsonian Institution is still “free to all”—a fact enshrined in mosaic at the entrance. Inside, there’s a stained-glass ceiling dome, rotating exhibits downstairs, and a permanent collection upstairs with exhibits that recall Petaluma’s early days. *20 4th St.* ☎ *707/778-4398. www.petalumamuseum.com. Thurs–Sat 10am–4pm; Sun noon–3pm & by appt.*

Need caffeine? Head to 10 Ⓐ ★ **Acre Coffee.** Open since late 2011, this hip, sophisticated spot serves excellent coffee drinks, including a divine bittersweet mocha. *21 4th St.* ☎ *707/772-5117. $.* Prefer your chocolate straight? At 10 Ⓑ **Viva Cocolat,** the bonbon selection hails from all around the world. There’s sipping chocolate too—enjoy it in the casual lounge. *110 Petaluma Blvd. N.* ☎ *707/778-9888. $.*

Walk back to your parking spot on Keller St. Once in your car, turn right on Western Ave. Take that a half-mile to:

With 1,300 types of seeds, Petaluma’s Seed Bank lets you invest…in your garden.

⑪ **Petaluma Creamery Cheese Shop.** This retail store is attached to one of Petaluma’s most productive and historic dairies—Petaluma Creamery was founded in 1913. You can get a 40-minute guided tour inside the butter-yellow factory if you’ve called ahead ($20 for adults, $10 for ages 7–18, free for ages 6 and younger), but if you haven’t, sample the signature Spring Hill Jersey Cheese at the nondescript shop, which also sells homemade ice cream, shakes, pizza, and coffee. *621 Western Ave.* ☎ *707/762-3446. Mon–Fri 6am–7pm; Sat 8am–8pm; Sun 10am–7pm***.**

Drive northeast on Western Ave., then turn left on Petaluma Blvd. N. Turn right on E. Washington St., then right again on Lakeville St. After 2½ miles, turn left on Frates Rd. Go 1½ miles, then turn left on Old Adobe Rd. On your right, look for:

⑫ ★★ **kids** **Green String Farm.** Much more than just a produce stand, this farm—named after a holistic method of sustainable farming—is a culture unto itself. The upbeat staff encourage you to sample anything, talk you through how to grow and cook what they sell, and don’t mind if you walk through the peaceful but playful property for a look at the chickens, goats, sheep, and cow. *3571 Old Adobe Rd.* ☎ *707/778-7500. Daily 10am–6pm (5pm in winter).*

Where to Dine

★★ **Central Market** *NEW AMERICAN* Farm-to-table cuisine's easy to do when there are plenty of farms not too far from your tables. Central Market's perfected the genre in a beautiful downtown space. The menu's pretty meat-heavy, though, so vegetarians might want to look elsewhere. ***134 Petaluma Blvd. N. ☎ 707/763-5252. Entrees $21–$28. AE, DISC, MC, V. Mon–Thurs 5:30–9:30 pm; Fri–Sat 5:30–10pm; Sun 5–9pm. Map p 98.***

★★ **Della Fattoria** *BAKERY* This brunch spot has walls the color of burnt earth, Italian farmhouse touches, piles of fresh-baked bread, and cases of pastries and cream-topped cakes. Entrees are made with amazingly fresh local ingredients. ***141 Petaluma Blvd. N. ☎ 707/763-0161. Entrees $5–$13. AE, DISC, MC, V. Mon–Thurs & Sat 6am–3pm; Fri 6am–9pm; Sun 9am–3pm. Map p 98.***

★ **Lala's Creamery** *ICE CREAM* This old-fashioned parlor is sure to evoke nostalgia in those who remember checkered floors and golden oldies. Though ice-cream creations take the spotlight at cheery Lala's, you can also get crepes (the "salty caramel" and the "cheese and greens" are worth trying), salads, and hot dogs. ***42 Petaluma Blvd. ☎ 707/778-9900. Entrees $4.50–$5.65. MC, V. Mon–Fri 7:30am–3pm; Sat–Sun 8am–2pm. Map p 98.***

★★ **Le Bistro** *FRENCH* This *très français* spot is tiny, dark, romantic, and delicious. Fish dishes are especially good. Reservations are a must. ***312 Petaluma Blvd. S. ☎ 707/762-8292. Entrees $9–$23. AE, MC, V. Wed; Thurs & Sun 5–8pm; Fri–Sat 5–8:30pm. Map p 98.***

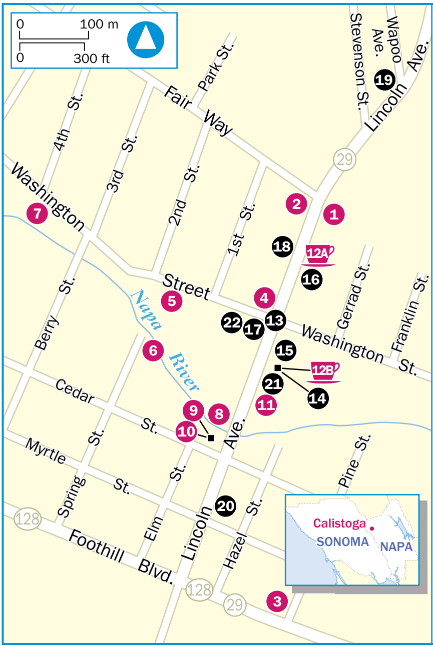
McNear's Saloon & Dining House *AMERICAN* A jovial place to grab a beer and a burger and maybe catch a game. This saloon is attached to the **Mystic Theater,** where big musical names play. ***23 Petaluma Blvd. N. ☎ 707/765-2121. Entrees $13–$25. AE, MC, V. Mon–Sat 11am–midnight; Sun 9am–midnight. Map p 98.***

kids **Old Chicago Pizza** *PIZZA* In a historic 1876 building downtown, this is a beloved Petaluma institution. Order a large deep-dish pie—it'll weigh almost five doughy pounds. ***41 Petaluma Blvd. N. ☎ 707/763-3897. Pizzas $4.10–$27. MC, V. Mon–Thurs 11:30am–10:30pm; Fri–Sat 11:30am–11:30pm; Sun 4pm–9:30pm. Map p 98.***

★ **SEA Modern Thai Cuisine** *THAI* The "SEA" stands for "southeast Asia," so if that's the type of food you're craving, come to this crimson-colored eatery. Locals recognize the smallish, friendly restaurant as their region's best Thai food; chef-owner Tony Ounpamornchai is something of a local celebrity. The curry dishes are big and delicious, and the rest of the menu fuses in Asia's freshest flavors. ***500 Petaluma Blvd. S. ☎ 707/766-6633. Entrees $10–$20. AE, MC, V. Lunch Tues–Fri 11:30am–3pm; dinner Tues–Sun 5–9pm. Closed Mon. Map p 98.***

★ **Water Street Bistro** *FRENCH* Right on the river, the food at this sunny spot represents what Petaluma dining is all about: fresh, local, seasonal ingredients. Your options include sandwiches, salads, quiche, and gelato. ***100 Petaluma Blvd. N. ☎ 707/763-9563. Entrees $5–$8. No credit cards. Mon–Fri 7:30am–3:30pm; Sat 8am–4pm; Sun 8:30am–2:30pm. Closed Tues. Map p 98.***

Calistoga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Wapoo Ave.
Lincoln Ave.
29
4th St.
3rd St.
2nd St.
1st St.
Washington Street
Washington St.
Gerrad St.
Franklin St.
Berry St.
Napa River
Cedar St.
Myrtle St.
Spring St.
Elm St.
Lincoln Ave.
Hazel St.
Pine St.
128
Foothill Blvd.
128
29
Calistoga
SONOMA
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12A
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1 Napa Valley Railroad Depot
2 Dr. Wilkinson's Hot Springs Resort
3 Calistoga Pottery
4 American Indian Trading Co
5 Sharpsteen Museum
6 Napa River
7 Holy Assumption Monastery
8 Lee Youngman Fine Art Gallery
9 Hurd Beeswax Candles
10 Ca'toga Galleria d'Arte
11 Mudd Henns
12A Calistoga Roastery
12B Village Bakery

Dining

13 All Seasons Bistro
14 Bosko's
15 Brannan's
16 Checkers
17 Hydro Grill
18 JoLe
19 Kitani Sushi
20 Pacifico
21 Soo Yuan
22 Wappo Bar & Bistro

Calistoga is an Old Western–style town with more than a touch of California eccentricity. Its people are still obsessed with Sam Brannan, a Maine-born pioneer who became California's first millionaire by selling gold-mining tools after stoking frenzy for the precious metal (he ran through San Francisco shouting of its discovery in the American River). When he came to this formerly Wappo, then Spanish, area, he was so taken with its hot springs that he bought thousands of acres on which to develop a spa resort town similar to what already existed in Saratoga, New York. In 1885, meaning to say that he would transform this into the Saratoga of California, he instead (perhaps due to his penchant for alcohol) proclaimed, "I will make this the Calistoga of Sarafornia!" The name stuck, and more than 120 years later, pleasure-seekers still come to enjoy the tiny town's therapeutic mineral water and mud baths. The waters here are so coveted that they're bottled and sold for a handsome profit: The next time you see Crystal Geyser or Calistoga Water at your local market, remember your visit here. This tour highlights downtown Calistoga's history and cultural diversity, with stops at the town's best stores and galleries. **START: The Historic Calistoga Depot, 1458 Lincoln Ave. Distance: Less than a half-mile (.8km) of walking, doable in a half- to a full day.**

Lincoln Ave. is the main drag of spa town Calistoga.

① ★ kids **Napa Valley Railroad Depot.** In 1868, it became possible to take the train to Calistoga, making it a gateway destination for wine country. This depot, California's second oldest, is on the National Register of Historic Places. Its site now supports six restored rail cars that still look as though they've just docked at the station. Inside the cars is a variety of quirky businesses, including a psychic from India, a florist, and a 25-year-old wine store. *1458 Lincoln Ave.* ☎ *707/942-6333.*

② ★★ **Dr. Wilkinson's Hot Springs Resort.** You can get a massage at any old spa, but only at Dr. Wilkinson's, one of Calistoga's many hot-spring resorts, can you detoxify in a volcanic-ash mud bath with a facial mask and cucumbers over your eyes, then soak in a roiling mineral bath, then get wrapped in a blanket, *then* have a muscle-melting hour-long massage. It's called "The Works," and it isn't for everyone (refrain if you're sensitive to heat or think you might not like being surrounded in mud—though it's better than it sounds), but those who like it *adore* it. The spa might not win any awards for its decor anytime soon (it's rather bland), but it gets first prize for its capability to relax clients. Named for the late Dr. John Wilkinson, an ahead-of-his-time chiropractor who provided alternative therapies in the 1940s, the resort is now co-managed by his children, Mark and Carolynne. *1507 Lincoln Ave.* ☎ *707/942-4102. www.drwilkinson.com. "The Works" $179 with a 60-min. massage or $139 with a 30-min. massage.*

③ **Calistoga Pottery.** A block south of Lincoln Ave., this shop showcases a colorful array of pieces you'll find in use at restaurants and wineries all over the valley. *1001 Foothill Blvd.* ☎ *707/942-0216. www.calistogapottery.com. Daily 9am–5pm (opens at 11am on Sun).*

④ **American Indian Trading Co.** Another notable local store is this narrow showcase. The owners, working in conjunction with Native

Get "The Works" at Dr. Wilkinson's.

SHARPSTEEN MUSEUM

Learn about Napa's past at the Sharpsteen Museum.

American tribes, sell stunning turquoise-and-silver jewelry, kachinas, dream catchers, medicine bags, and other crafts made by descendants of Calistoga's original residents. *1407 Lincoln Ave. ☎ 707/942-9330. www.aitcoc.com. Daily 10am–6pm.*

⑤ kids ★★ **Sharpsteen Museum.** The Sharpsteen chronicles northern Napa County's natural and cultural history. The definite highlight is the painstakingly created diorama depicting Brannan's resort as it was in 1868. The 32-foot-long (9.6m) town replica took nearly 3 years to build and sits under the panoramic photo on which it's based. Other exhibits display Wappo artifacts, Robert Louis Stevenson paraphernalia, a geothermal demonstration, and a restored stagecoach. Ben Sharpsteen, the museum's founder, was an Academy Award–winning Disney filmmaker, so the museum also contains one of his Oscars. *1311 Washington St. ☎ 707/942-5911. www.sharpsteen-museum.org. Daily 11am–4pm. Suggested donation: $3+ for adults.*

Just to the left of the museum is the beautiful:

⑥ **Napa River,** home to a threatened population of steelhead and Chinook salmon. Right here, you can actually cross the river on foot—there's a shallow barrier across which adults and kids can easily wade to get to the playground on the other side.

Back out on Washington St., pass the mint-green Community Presbyterian Church (3rd and Washington St.) to find the fairy-tale-like:

⑦ ★★ **Holy Assumption Monastery & Orthodox Religious Center.** Founded in the 1940s by Russian and Chinese refugee nuns, this peaceful religious center was originally a hotel. They built one of its woodsy chapels to replicate the one at Fort Ross. Surrounding the quaint buildings are fountains, a koi pond, and Asian-inspired gardens. If you're lucky, you may spot the friendly resident one-eyed cat. The parish welcomes visitors of all backgrounds. *1519 Washington St. ☎ 707/942-6244. Hours vary; call ahead. Free admission, but donations accepted.*

Turn right to get back on Lincoln Ave., cross a bridge over the river, and enter:

⑧ **Lee Youngman Fine Art Gallery,** a store with exquisite artworks and upbeat staff. *1316 Lincoln Ave. ☎ 707/942-0585. Daily 10am–5pm (noon–4pm on Sun).*

At ⑨ ★ **kids** **Hurd Beeswax Candles,** the store's fast-talking owner, Mary Sue Frediani, explains her various wares: She stocks hand-rolled, honeycomb, and long-burning candles for all occasions. Ask to see the observation beehive through a hidden window in the wall. Frediani points out the queen bee, who lays 1,500 eggs each day. ☎ *800/977-7211. www.hurdbeeswaxcandles.com.* In the same retail space is **Vermeil Wines,** a tasting bar, where fourth-generation vintners pour you a taste of their heritage Charbono. Frediani's enthusiasm for her family's fields will make you feel right at home. She recommends ordering a couple of tastings to share. Pay $4 per taste or $12 for five. *1255 Lincoln Ave.* ☎ *877/341-3054. www.vermeilwines.com. Sun–Thurs 10am–5:30pm (Fri–Sat until 8pm).*

In the same shopping complex is:

⑩ **Ca'toga Galleria d'Arte,** a gorgeous space showcasing the works of Venice-born artist Carlo Marchiori. His Renaissance, baroque, and neoclassical styles are evidenced here in the form of porcelain plates, acrylic paintings, original furniture—and a fantastic cosmological ceiling mural that you can marvel at by merely looking up. Look down, and you'll see a glittering terrazzo floor that charts the pre-Copernican universe. Find the Latin inscription *"Hic Es"* ("You are here"), and you'll know you've found Earth. *1206 Cedar St.* ☎ *707/942-3900. www.catoga.com. Thurs–Mon 11am–6pm.*

⑪ **Mudd Henns.** End your tour by buying an only-in-Calistoga souvenir: mud. Yes, you can actually purchase the therapeutic local muck pre-packaged and ready to take home. A favorite is the detoxifying Fango Mud bath powder, made with volcanic ash, salicylic powder, and pine-needle extract, to relieve achy muscles and joints. *1348C Lincoln Ave.* ☎ *800/793-9220. www.muddhens.com. Daily 10am–9pm.*

Calistoga's not exactly a high-stress place, but take time anyway to unwind at either of the town's best coffee shops: ☕12 Ⓐ **Calistoga Roastery** for its fresh single-bean varietal coffees. *1426 Lincoln Ave.* ☎ *707/942-5757. $.* Or ☕12 Ⓑ **Village Bakery** for sticky buns and creamy gelato as well as sandwiches and tarts. *1353 Lincoln Ave.* ☎ *707/942-1443. $.*

Where **to Dine**

★★ **All Seasons Bistro** *AMERICAN* This cleanly decorated bistro is very white, save for a red ceiling accented with Art Deco–style fans. As the name might imply, the menu changes seasonally; order from it or ask about Chef Thomas Halligan's tasting menus. *1400 Lincoln Ave.* ☎ *707/942-9111. Entrees $12–$24. DISC, MC, V. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sun; lunch Fri–Sun. Map p 102.*

★ **Bosko's** *ITALIAN* This trattoria with rock walls, wood-fired pizza, and fresh homemade pasta has a relaxing atmosphere. Save room for dessert—the tiramisu is stupendous. *1364 Lincoln Ave.* ☎ *707/942-9088. Entrees $8.75–$22. AE, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 102.*

★ **Brannan's** *NEW AMERICAN* A large Arts and Crafts–style restaurant with a classy fireplace dining room for chilly evenings and

JoLe combines modern style and family recipes.

alfresco seating for warm days. Big salads, substantial sandwiches, and well-spiced specialties. *1374 Lincoln Ave.* ☎ *707/942-2233. Entrees $10–$34. AE, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily (no lunch on Mon). Map p 102.*

kids **Checkers** *ITALIAN* Though entrees are mostly Italian (think pastas, pizzas, and calzones), the menu also lists unexpected options like a Thai noodle salad. Start with a hot, garlicky appetizer like spinach and artichoke dip. *1414 Lincoln Ave.* ☎ *707/942-9300. Entrees $8–$15. AE, DISC, MC, V. 11:30am–9:30pm (10pm Fri–Sat). Map p 102.*

★ **Hydro Grill** *AMERICAN* The more casual counterpart of All Seasons Bistro (see above), Hydro Grill has brick walls, lots of mirrors, and a great bar scene. Twenty on-tap beers make the Friday and Saturday evening entertainment more fun: Live music encompasses genres from blues to rock 'n' roll to swing. *1403 Lincoln Ave.* ☎ *707/942-9777. Entrees $8–$17. DISC, MC, V. Breakfast, lunch & dinner daily. Map p 102.*

JoLe *NEW AMERICAN* Serving small plates with huge flavor, chefs Matt and Sonjia Spector (a husband-and-wife team) employ local, organic ingredients whenever they can. Many of their recipes are updates of dishes originally conceived by Sonjia's mom and grandmother. Peruse the eclectic selection of wines from small producers. *1457 Lincoln Ave. (inside Mount View Hotel).* ☎ *707/942-5938. Entrees $15–$50; tasting menus $50–$130. AE, DISC, MC, V. Dinner daily; brunch Sat–Sun. Map p 102.*

★ **Kitani Sushi** *JAPANESE* A selection of Japanese specialties (udon, tempura, and the like) complements a long sushi list in this small, traditionally decorated restaurant. *1631 Lincoln Ave.* ☎ *707/942-6857. Entrees $4–$23. MC, V. Lunch & dinner Wed–Mon. Map p 102.*

★ **kids** **Pacifico** *MEXICAN* At this festive spot, try a grilled fajita or one of the many traditional dishes with a pitcher of bright-blue Cabo Waborita. Friday nights, a mariachi band plays; on Saturdays, it's live Latin jazz. *1237 Lincoln Ave.* ☎ *707/942-4400. Entrees $10–$18. MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 102.*

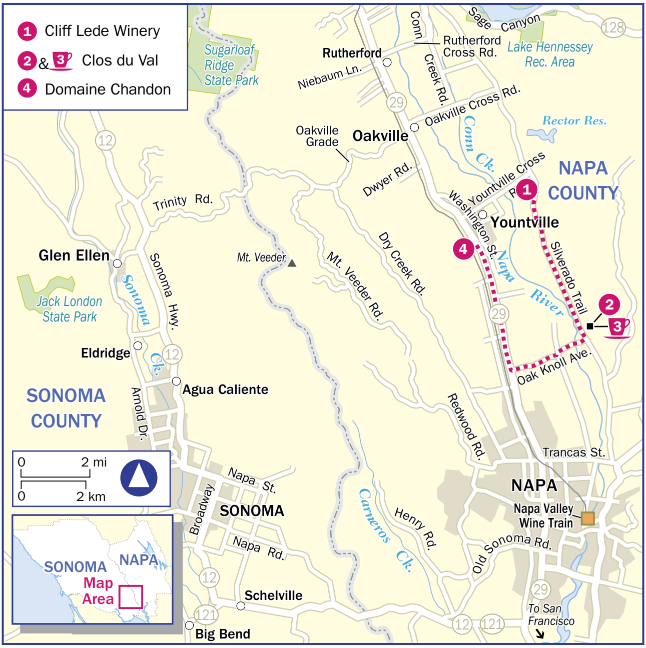
Soo Yuan *CHINESE* This low-key joint with a long MSG-free menu offers Mandarin and Szechuan soups, platters, and moo shu. *1354 Lincoln Ave.* ☎ *707/942-9404. Entrees $4.25–$15. AE, DISC, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Map p 102.*

★ **Wappo Bar & Bistro** *CONTINENTAL* This nook has an extensive wine list accompanying creative concoctions like chiles rellenos stuffed with currants and pine nuts and accented with walnut-pomegranate sauce. If it's warm out, dine on the brick patio. *1226 Washington St.* ☎ *707/942-4712. Entrees $14–$24. AE, MC, V. Lunch & dinner Wed–Mon. Map p 102.* ●

5

The Great Outdoors

Napa **by Bike**


① Cliff Lede Winery
② & ③ Clos du Val
④ Domaine Chandon
Sugarloaf Ridge State Park
Rutherford
Niebaum Ln.
Conn Creek Rd.
Rutherford Cross Rd.
Sage Canyon
Lake Hennessey Rec. Area
128
29
Oakville Cross Rd.
Rector Res.
Oakville Grade
Oakville
Conn Ck.
Dwyer Rd.
Yountville Cross Rd.
NAPA COUNTY
Washington St.
Yountville
12
Trinity Rd.
Glen Ellen
Mt. Veeder
Mt. Veeder Rd.
Dry Creek Rd.
Napa River
Silverado Trail
Sonoma Ck.
Sonoma Hwy.
Jack London State Park
Eldridge
Agua Caliente
Oak Knoll Ave.
SONOMA COUNTY
Arnold Dr.
Redwood Rd.
Trancas St.
0 2 mi
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NAPA
Napa Valley Wine Train
Napa St.
Broadway
SONOMA
Napa Rd.
Carneros Ck.
Henry Rd.
Old Sonoma Rd.
SONOMA
NAPA
Map Area
Schelville
121
Big Bend
To San Francisco

Majestic scenery and flat terrain combine to make Napa and Sonoma consummate bikers' destinations. Touring on two wheels while inhaling fresh country air is the most exhilarating way to appreciate wine country. This route, appropriate for those in moderate physical condition, cycles through Napa Valley and stops at some of its best wineries. *Tip:* Temper your intake and eat well, because biking under the influence is illegal. If you only want to imbibe at two wineries, picnic but don't taste at Clos du Val.

START: Yountville's Washington Street. Trip Length: Half a day (allow a full day if you like to linger). For where to rent bikes (you can get them delivered to you), see p 200.

Head north on Washington St., then turn right on Yount St., then right again on Yountville Cross Rd. After 3 miles (4.8km), on your right will be:

Previous page: Rent canoes at River's Edge (p 114).

① ★★ **Cliff Lede Winery.** This is the northernmost winery in the famous Stags Leap District. In the tasting room, energetic staffers tell all about their rich, bordeaux-focused varietals. After tasting, look at the works by famous artists on the outdoor terrace, which also offers views of vineyards and the Vaca

Food and Safety Along the Way

You'll want to eat sometime along this ride. To assemble your own picnic, stop at Yountville's family-owned **Ranch Market Too** (6498 Washington St.; ☎ 707/944-2662) beforehand to buy food (bring a backpack if you do this). Alternatively, book with ★★ **Napa Valley Bike Tours** (**NVBT;** 6795 Washington St.; ☎ 707/251-8687), a company that will cater lunch at any local winery with picnic grounds. Another benefit of going with them: Their experts, who helped us devise this tour, follow you with a van. That way, if you want to buy wine as you taste, you won't have to haul bottles around. Their vans also stock first-aid kits and bicycle-maintenance tools. Best of all, NVBT provides a tour guide so you won't have to worry about looking down to read directions as you ride.

Mountains. *1473 Yountville Cross Rd.* ☎ *707/944-8642. See p 142.*

Turn right out of Cliff Lede's parking lot. After a fifth of a mile (.3km), Yountville Cross Road ends. Turn right onto the historic Silverado Trail and pedal the 3.7 miles (6km) to:

② ★ **Clos du Val.** Try this French-influenced winery's signature cabernet, peek at its rose garden, and roll a game at its lovely *pétanque* (French bocce) court. This is also your picnic stop. *5330 Silverado Trail, Napa.* ☎ *707/261-5200. See p 142.*

Enjoy your lunch at ③ **Clos du Val,** which has two picnic areas. For the prettiest surroundings, choose the olive grove.

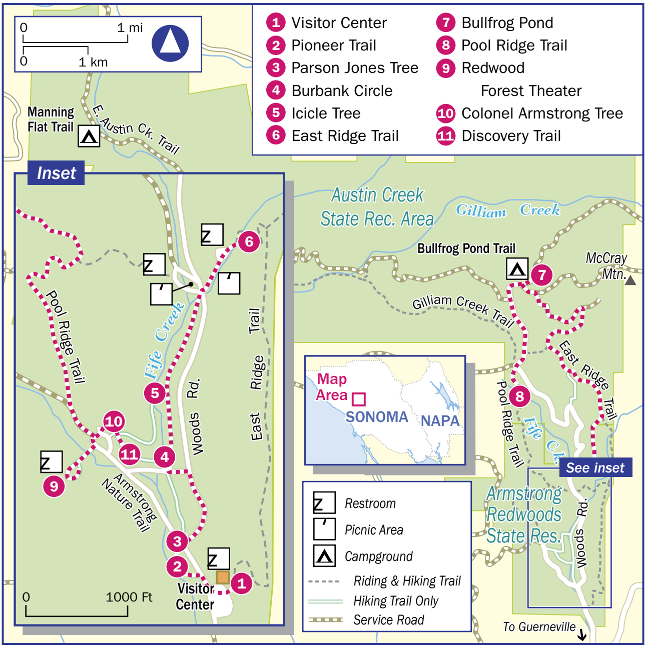
Continue south on Silverado Trail. Turn right on Oak Knoll, cross Hwy. 29 and the railroad tracks. Turn right on Solano Ave, and follow it north 4 miles (6.4km) until it ends at an intersection.

Cycle up ④ ★★ **Domaine Chandon**'s long, vineyard-flanked driveway and across the creek's bridge to the winery's entrance. Because Domaine Chandon was founded by French champagne house Moët & Chandon, the amenities here are luxurious. Take in the educational presentation at the 28-seat theater before tasting the valley's most renowned bubbly. *1 California Dr., Yountville.* ☎ *707/944-2280. See p 146.*

To get back to this tour's starting point, bike to the end of Domaine Chandon's driveway, then turn left onto California Dr. Cross the railroad tracks, go under a bridge, and ride until California Dr. ends. Turn left on Washington St.

Bike your way through Napa.

The Best Wine Country **Hike**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1 mi
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1 km
1 Visitor Center
2 Pioneer Trail
3 Parson Jones Tree
4 Burbank Circle
5 Icicle Tree
6 East Ridge Trail
7 Bullfrog Pond
8 Pool Ridge Trail
9 Redwood Forest Theater
10 Colonel Armstrong Tree
11 Discovery Trail
Manning Flat Trail
E. Austin Ck. Trail
Inset
Austin Creek State Rec. Area
Gilliam Creek
Bullfrog Pond Trail
McCray Mtn.
Gilliam Creek Trail
East Ridge Trail
Pool Ridge Trail
Fife Ck.
See inset
Armstrong Redwoods State Res.
Woods Rd.
To Guerneville
Map Area
SONOMA
NAPA
Restroom
Picnic Area
Campground
Riding & Hiking Trail
Hiking Trail Only
Service Road
Pool Ridge Trail
Fife Creek
Woods Rd.
East Ridge Trail
Armstrong Nature Trail
Visitor Center
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1000 Ft

The Armstrong Redwoods State Reserve is the natural California you always see in photos: regal, millennia-old redwoods through which only slivers of sunlight slice in. The adjacent Austin Creek State Recreation Area, by contrast, is an open forest with more kinds of indigenous trees and wildlife. This loop hike highlights the park's biology and history and takes you into the giant redwoods. It's suitable for those in moderate physical condition. **17000 Armstrong Woods Rd., Guerneville. ☎ 707/869-2015. www.parks.ca.gov. Park for free at the visitor center and walk 10 minutes to the trail head; park entry is $8 per vehicle ($7 for seniors; pedestrians and bicyclists enter for free). 8am to 1 hr after sunset. Distance: About 4 miles (6.4km). Trip Length: Half a day.**

Travel Tip

Before you head out on this hike, stock up on picnic food and supplies at **Oakville Grocery** (in Healdsburg and Oakville; see p 84).

Park in front of the ① Visitor Center and follow the signs to **② Pioneer Trail,** a mulch path that wends by first-generation redwoods. Notice the green carpeting along the trail. That's not clover, but oxalis—identifiable by its compound leaves with three leaflets and colored flowers. After passing a number of downed trees blown over by strong winds (redwoods have a surprisingly shallow root system), you'll find the still-sturdy ③ **Parson Jones Tree.** This is a prime example of Coastal Redwood, the tallest of the tree species—and at 310 feet (93m), Parson Jones is the reserve's tallest tree. In shady, cool conditions, redwoods can grow 3 feet (.9m) per year, but once their top is exposed to sunlight, that rate slows to only an inch. This impressive organism, more than 1,300 years old, was named for Rev. William Ladd Jones, who helped save this grove from being logged. He was also the husband of Lizzie Armstrong Jones (see below).

Where the trail splits at the creek, take the right fork and look for ④ **Burbank Circle,** a perfect ring of centuries-old trees—it's a mystery how they got that way.

Stay on Pioneer Trail, and on your left you'll see the ⑤ **Icicle Tree,** so named because of the massive icicle-like burls that used to hang off it. Burls occur when a tree repeatedly buds over in the same spot. Unfortunately, vandals have sheared the tree of most of its protrusions. Redwood is highly valued for furniture-making, so it can fetch a pretty penny—a sad example of how short-term commercial gain can trump long-term sustainability.

Find a picnic spot and break out the goodies you got from **Oakville Grocery.**

Now that you've got energy, veer right onto ⑥ **East Ridge Trail.** Foliage becomes more diverse here: You'll notice that cool shadiness shifts to a more open forest highlighted by a mix of redwoods, oaks, firs, and madrones. If it's spring, wildflowers like buttercups, iris, lupines, and poppies will be showing off their colors. At the paved road, turn right to see ⑦ **Bullfrog Pond.** Listen for the pond's singing namesake amphibians.

Walk back down the way you came, but turn right onto ⑧ **Pool Ridge Trail,** which ends in a paved loop with a parking area. Veer right here and head down the short path to ⑨ **Redwood Forest Theater,** a natural amphitheater that used to seat more than 2,000 people for outdoor concerts and weddings. It's no longer used because the surrounding ecosystem is too delicate.

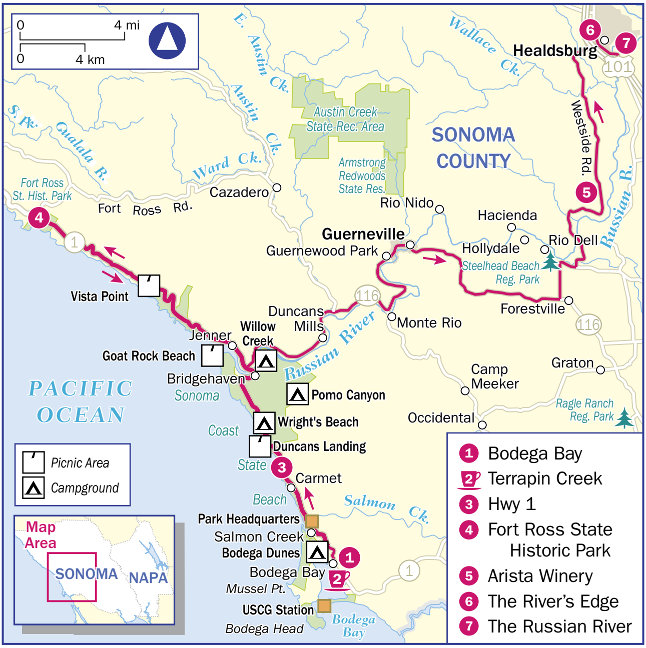
On the other side of the paved loop is the colossal, 1,400-year-old ⑩ **Colonel Armstrong Tree.** The preserve's oldest organism stands 308 feet (92m) tall and has a diameter approaching 15 feet (4.5m).

Colonel James Boydston Armstrong was an Ohio-born lumberman who eventually realized that forests are fragile—it was his efforts that kept this reserve preserved. He bought the land in 1875 and fought to make it a state park. Though he died before that happened, his daughter, **Lizzie Armstrong Jones,** saw to it that a county initiative was passed to realize her father's dream.

Finally, take the short ⑪ **Discovery Trail.** It'll merge with the Pioneer Trail to lead you back to your car.

Ponder the tall trees at Armstrong Redwoods State Reserve.

From the Russian River to the Pacific Coast


0 4 mi
0 4 km
E. Austin Ck.
Austin Ck.
Wallace Ck.
Healdsburg
101
S. Fk. Gualala R.
Ward Ck.
Austin Creek State Rec. Area
Armstrong Redwoods State Res.
SONOMA COUNTY
Westside Rd.
Russian R.
Fort Ross St. Hist. Park
Fort Ross Rd.
Cazadero
Rio Nido
Hacienda
Guerneville
Guernewood Park
Hollydale
Rio Dell
Steelhead Beach Reg. Park
Vista Point
Forestville
Duncans Mills
Monte Rio
Jenner
Willow Creek
Russian River
116
Goat Rock Beach
Camp Meeker
Graton
Bridgehaven
Sonoma Coast State Beach
Pomo Canyon
PACIFIC OCEAN
Wright's Beach
Occidental
Ragle Ranch Reg. Park
Duncans Landing
Carmet
Salmon Ck.
Park Headquarters
Salmon Creek
Bodega Dunes
Bodega Bay
Mussel Pt.
USCG Station
Bodega Head
Bodega Bay
1
Picnic Area
Campground
Map Area
SONOMA
NAPA
1 Bodega Bay
2 Terrapin Creek
3 Hwy 1
4 Fort Ross State Historic Park
5 Arista Winery
6 The River's Edge
7 The Russian River

Sonoma's dazzling Pacific coastline and tranquil Russian River are a testament to California's grandeur. This itinerary has you spending the morning at a breathtaking beach and the afternoon floating on a river. You'll also drive the famously rugged, cliff-hugging Pacific Coast Highway 1 ("PCH" to locals). Start the day early (8:30am) so you can fit everything in. ***Tip:*** Dress in layers for the ever-changing coastal weather, and wear shoes in which you'd be comfortable walking on wet ground. **START: Bodega Bay. Trip Length: 1 day.**

The seaside town of ① ★★ **Bodega Bay** (www.bodegabay.com) makes for a lovely escape from everyday life. Stroll around for about 10 minutes to get a feel for this fishing village's coastal culture. Hitchcock fans shouldn't miss *Potter Schoolhouse:* The legendary film director's radar for so-innocent-they're-creepy locations must have been on high alert when he spotted this 1873 structure—he gave it a significant role in *The Birds.* The building is a private residence now, so simply stroll on by. *17110 Bodega Lane.* ☎ *707/876-3257. www.bodegaschool.com.* ***Note:*** The tiny town of Bodega Bay is not to be confused with the town of Bodega, which is a bit farther southeast.

2 ★★ **Terrapin Creek.** The dining room here is a cozy space with a fireplace and handcrafted furnishings—but nice as the interior may be, the real highlight is the view of the bay. The global menu focuses on organic coastal cuisine and seasonal dishes that are elegant takes on comfort-food favorites. As for wine, you won't be able to order anything made west of Highway 101, a result of local pride. *1580 Eastshore Rd., Bodega Bay.* *☎ 707/875-2700. Entrees $22–$29. Lunch & dinner available Thurs–Sun.*

③ ★★★ kids **Hwy. 1 along Sonoma Coast State Beach.** This 21-mile (34km) drive shows off some of California's most dramatic coastal lands. You'll pass rugged shale bluffs, coves, headlands, and offshore reefs. More than 300 bird species populate this stretch. If it's spring, look for sprays of wildflowers like blue lupine and verbena. There are plenty of pullouts for photo ops, and many of the beaches you'll pass have tide pools teeming with invertebrate life (they're accessible from more than a dozen points). Veer left when you reach Goat Rock Road to visit the peninsula's tip, **Whale Point,** so named because the annual grey-whale migration passes here from December to April, and because humpbacks are here year-round. Whale Point is also the site of **Goat Rock Beach,** the Russian River's mouth and where hundreds of harbor seals converge and breed (the pups are here from Mar–June). *Sonoma Coast State Beach.* *☎ 707/875-3483. www.parks.ca.gov. Call for hours of operation.*

California's Pacific coastline is ruggedly beautiful.

④ ★★ kids **Fort Ross State Historic Park.** On a wave-cut marine terrace, Fort Ross is characterized by steep bluffs, old-growth redwoods, and many spots where you can see impact of the famous San Andreas Fault, which comes ashore 2 miles (3.2km) south of the fort and cuts through the old Russian orchard. Look for sag ponds, escarpments, damaged trees, and off-kilter fences, all remnants of the notorious 1906 earthquake. *19005*

A Sonoma-style picnic at the lovely Preston Vineyards.

Hwy. 1, Jenner. ☎ 707/847-3286 (707/847-3437 for the museum and bookstore). www.parks.ca.gov. Park grounds open Sat–Sun & holidays. Historic buildings, the visitor center & the bookstore are open Fri–Sun 10am–4:30pm. Park day-use fee: $8 ($7 per vehicle for seniors).

Travel Tip: In case of rain . . .

If the day turns out to be rainy, gray, and cold (and kayaking is the last thing you want to do), stop at funky Guerneville on your way back from the coast. For a detailed tour, flip to p 88.

⑤ **Arista Winery**. Stop off for a quick sip at this winery known for their small-batch pinot noir and bone-dry gewürztraminer. Japanese water gardens and picnic tables make this a good spot to bring a snack. ***7015 Westside Rd., Healdsburg.*** *☎ 707/473-0606. See p 135.*

Rent water gear from ⑥ **River's Edge** in Healdsburg. Canoes and double kayaks cost $75 for a half-day; single kayaks run $45 (reservations recommended). The cost of your rental includes paddles, life vests, and a shuttle ride back to your car. Guided trips are available upon request. *13840 Healdsburg Ave., Healdsburg. ☎ 707/433-7247. www.riversedgekayakandcanoe.com. Full-day canoe or double kayak $90; full-day single kayak $55.*

⑦ ★★★ **kids** **The Russian River.** A paddle on this rain-fed river is leisurely for the most part, so it's appropriate for those in moderate physical condition, as well as children—though there are a few hairier sections. Glide through lush Alexander Valley, past vineyards and tree-lined private property. You'll also see unnamed but inviting beaches where you can break out a picnic. Keep an eye out for wildlife: This area is abundant with river otters, turtles, great blue heron, osprey, and egrets. Finish at either Rio Nido (a shorter, 11-mile/18km journey) or Healdsburg Beach (longer at 15 miles/24km)—you'll recognize Rio Nido by the congregation of River's Edge boats, and Healdsburg Beach is a dead end, so it's impossible to miss. River's Edge shuttles you back to your car from either finishing point. *Allow 4–5 hrs.*

For dinner options in Healdsburg, see p 86. ●

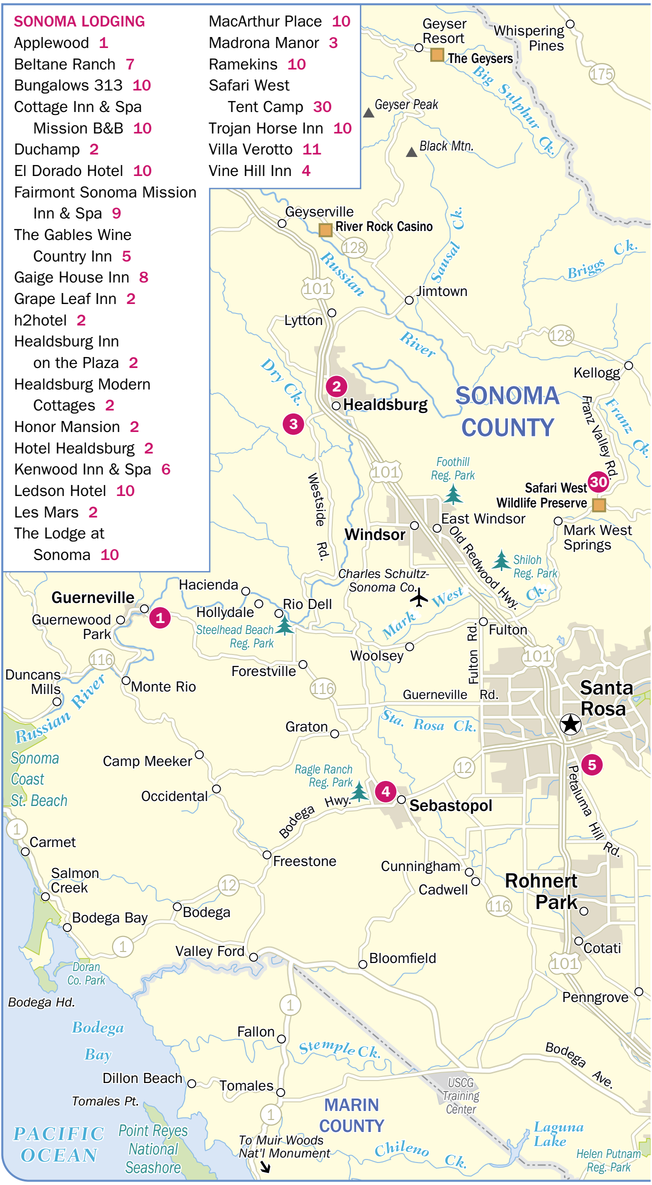
Canoe the Russian River.

6

Napa & Sonoma Lodging

Where to Stay in Wine Country

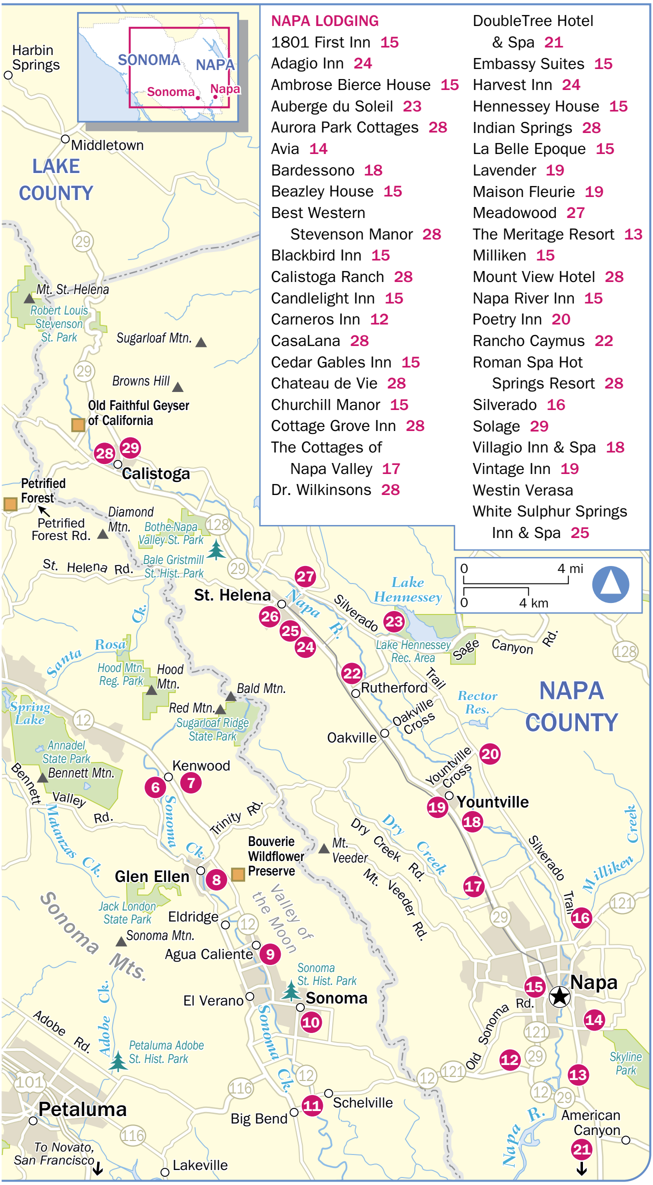
SONOMA LODGING	
Applewood	1
Beltane Ranch	7
Bungalows 313	10
Cottage Inn & Spa Mission B&B	10
Duchamp	2
El Dorado Hotel	10
Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa	9
The Gables Wine Country Inn	5
Gaige House Inn	8
Grape Leaf Inn	2
h2hotel	2
Healdsburg Inn on the Plaza	2
Healdsburg Modern Cottages	2
Honor Mansion	2
Hotel Healdsburg	2
Kenwood Inn & Spa	6
Ledson Hotel	10
Les Mars	2
The Lodge at Sonoma	10
MacArthur Place	10
Madrona Manor	3
Ramekins	10
Safari West Tent Camp	30
Trojan Horse Inn	10
Villa Verotto	11
Vine Hill Inn	4


Geyser Resort
Whispering Pines
The Geysers
175
Big Sulphur Ck.
Geyser Peak
Black Mtn.
Geyserville
River Rock Casino
128
Sausal Ck.
Russian
101
Jimtown
Lytton
Briggs Ck.
River
128
Kellogg
Dry Ck.
2
Healdsburg
3
SONOMA COUNTY
Franz Valley Rd.
Franz Ck.
Westside Rd.
101
Foothill Reg. Park
Safari West Wildlife Preserve
30
Windsor
East Windsor
Mark West Springs
Old Redwood Hwy.
Shiloh Reg. Park
Charles Schultz-Sonoma Co.
Mark West Ck.
Guerneville
Hacienda
Guernewood Park
1
Hollydale
Rio Dell
Steelhead Beach Reg. Park
Fulton Rd.
Fulton
Woolsey
101
116
Duncans Mills
Monte Rio
Forestville
116
Guerneville Rd.
Russian River
Santa Rosa
Sta. Rosa Ck.
Graton
Sonoma Coast St. Beach
Camp Meeker
Ragle Ranch Reg. Park
12
5
Occidental
Bodega Hwy.
4
Sebastopol
Petaluma Hill Rd.
1
Carmet
Freestone
Cunningham
Cadwell
Rohnert Park
Salmon Creek
12
116
Bodega Bay
Bodega
1
Cotati
Valley Ford
Bloomfield
101
Doran Co. Park
Bodega Hd.
1
Penngrove
Bodega Bay
Fallon
Stemple Ck.
Bodega Ave.
Dillon Beach
Tomales
USCG Training Center
Tomales Pt.
1
MARIN COUNTY
PACIFIC OCEAN
Point Reyes National Seashore
To Muir Woods Nat'l Monument
Chileno Ck.
Laguna Lake
Helen Putnam Reg. Park

Previous page: Soak in a luxurious bathtub at the Gaige House Inn (p 127) in Glen Ellen.

NAPA LODGING

1801 First Inn	15
Adagio Inn	24
Ambrose Bierce House	15
Auberge du Soleil	23
Aurora Park Cottages	28
Avia	14
Bardessono	18
Beazley House	15
Best Western Stevenson Manor	28
Blackbird Inn	15
Calistoga Ranch	28
Candlelight Inn	15
Carneros Inn	12
CasaLana	28
Cedar Gables Inn	15
Chateau de Vie	28
Churchill Manor	15
Cottage Grove Inn	28
The Cottages of Napa Valley	17
Dr. Wilkinsons	28
DoubleTree Hotel & Spa	21
Embassy Suites	15
Harvest Inn	24
Hennessey House	15
Indian Springs	28
La Belle Epoque	15
Lavender	19
Maison Fleurie	19
Meadowood	27
The Meritage Resort	13
Milliken	15
Mount View Hotel	28
Napa River Inn	15
Poetry Inn	20
Rancho Caymus	22
Roman Spa Hot Springs Resort	28
Silverado	16
Solage	29
Villagio Inn & Spa	18
Vintage Inn	19
Westin Verasa	
White Sulphur Springs Inn & Spa	25


SONOMA
NAPA
Sonoma
Napa
Harbin Springs
Middletown
LAKE COUNTY
29
Mt. St. Helena
Robert Louis Stevenson St. Park
Sugarloaf Mtn.
Browns Hill
Old Faithful Geyser of California
28
29
Calistoga
Petrified Forest
Petrified Forest Rd.
Diamond Mtn.
Bothe-Napa Valley St. Park
128
Bale Gristmill St. Hist. Park
St. Helena Rd.
St. Helena
27
26
25
24
Napa R.
Silverado
23
Lake Hennessey
Lake Hennessey Rec. Area
Sage
Canyon
Rd.
Trail
22
Rutherford
Oakville Cross
Oakville
Rector Res.
NAPA COUNTY
Santa Rosa Ck.
Hood Mtn. Reg. Park
Hood Mtn.
Bald Mtn.
Red Mtn.
Sugarloaf Ridge State Park
Spring Lake
12
Annadel State Park
Bennett Mtn.
Bennett Valley Rd.
Kenwood
6
7
Trinity Rd.
Yountville Cross
20
Yountville
19
18
Sonoma Ck.
Matanzas Ck.
Bouverie Wildflower Preserve
Mt. Veeder
Dry Creek Rd.
Dry Creek
Mt. Veeder Rd.
Silverado Trail
Milliken Creek
17
16
121
Glen Ellen
8
Jack London State Park
Eldridge
Sonoma Mtn.
Valley of the Moon
Agua Caliente
9
Sonoma Mts.
Sonoma St. Hist. Park
Sonoma
10
El Verano
Adobe Ck.
Adobe Rd.
Petaluma Adobe St. Hist. Park
101
Petaluma
116
To Novato, San Francisco
Lakeville
Big Bend
11
Schelville
Old Sonoma Rd.
15
Napa
14
Skyline Park
12
13
American Canyon
21
0
4 mi
0
4 km

Napa Lodging A to Z

★ **Adagio Inn** ST. HELENA Rooms in this quiet Edwardian B&B feature stained-glass windows and reading nooks. Amenities include a decadent breakfast, king-size beds, Wi-Fi, and evening wine and cheese. *1417 Kearny St.* ☎ *707/963-2238. www.adagioinn.com. 3 units. $200–$400. MC, V. Map p 116.*

★ **Ambrose Bierce House** ST. HELENA Once the home of author Ambrose Bierce, this 1872 Victorian's comfortable rooms have canopied beds, fireplaces, and Jacuzzi tubs. A champagne breakfast is included—as for dinner, downtown's an easy walk. *1515 Main St.* ☎ *707/963-3003. www.ambrosebiercehouse.com. 4 units. $199–$299. MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ **Auberge du Soleil** RUTHERFORD With interior decor that's nearly unsurpassed in the region (it's contemporary Spanish-Mediterranean), Auberge is upscale enough to belong to Relais & Châteaux. Oversized beds are sheathed in the softest of linens, and the rooms' other highlights include outdoor terraces and flatscreen TVs. Visit the superb restaurant, the luxurious spa, and the open-air art gallery. *180 Rutherford Hill Rd.* ☎ *707/963-1211. www.aubergedusoleil.com. 50 units. Doubles $600–$5,200. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★ **Aurora Park Cottages** CALISTOGA This retreat's homey cottages sport outside decks where you can savor a basket of pastries and fruit. Innkeepers are local experts, so ask them to customize a tour plan. *1807 Foothill Blvd.* ☎ *707/942-6733. www.aurorapark.com. 6 units. $259–$305. AE, MC, V. Map p 116.*

Rutherford's Auberge du Soleil is the luxury-lodging choice in Napa.

Woodsy scenery surrounds Calistoga Ranch.

★★ **Avia** NAPA Now a Hyatt-operated property, this well-situated hotel is clean and modern with mostly spacious rooms and bathrooms that make you feel like royalty. *1450 1st St.* ☎ *707/224-3900. www.avianapa.hyatt.com. 141 units. Doubles $189–$539. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★★ **Bardessono** YOUNTVILLE Bardessono's clean, earthy modernity and fetching artworks are just the surface of what makes this new, pet-friendly hotel so attractive. Its staff is young, energetic, and attentive, whether at the rooftop pool or at **Lucy,** the excellent restaurant (p 93). This is the only hotel in California to have earned LEED Platinum certification for its many efforts toward sustainability. Upon arrival, you'll get a glass of wine, then be led through the property's open layout, a design theme that extends into the posh rooms. *6526 Yount St., Yountville.* ☎ *707/204-6000. www.bardessono.com. 62 units. Doubles $550–$1,360. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ **Beazley House** NAPA Open since 1981 and still run by its original owners, this pet-friendly, wood-shingled property stakes its claim as Napa's first B&B. Offerings include country-style rooms (no TV), gardens, and Friday wine tastings. *1910 1st St.* ☎ *800/559-1649. www.beazleyhouse.com. 11 units. Doubles $195–$340. MC, V. Map p 116.*

Best Western Stevenson Manor Inn CALISTOGA Close to town center, this value-oriented inn's large rooms feature a fireplace, kitchenette, or balcony. Amenities include breakfast, a pool, hot tub, sauna, and steam room. Check the website for deals. *1830 Lincoln Ave.* ☎ *707/942-1112. www.stevensonmanor.com. 34 units. Doubles $139–$279. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ **Blackbird Inn** NAPA A stay at this well-located B&B includes afternoon wine tastings, Wi-Fi, and DVDs to borrow. Craftsman elements give the exterior a lodge feel, while rooms are country-style with spa tubs and fireplaces. *1755 1st St.* ☎ *707/226-2450. www.blackbirdinnnapa.com. 8 units. $185–$285. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★★ **Calistoga Ranch** CALISTOGA Operated by the prestigious Auberge brand, this quiet, airy ranch amid the pines combines modern luxury with earthiness. Freestanding, pet-friendly lodges display elegant decor and a setup blurring the line between indoor and outdoor. The restaurant and spa impress. *580 Lommel Rd. ☎ 707/254-2800. www.calistogaranch.com. 46 units. Doubles $825–$1,250; cottages up to $4,200. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ **Candlelight Inn** NAPA A Tudor mansion on Napa Creek, this B&B in the redwoods (2 miles/3.2km from downtown) is a perennial favorite. Country-style rooms come with a private balcony, a marble fireplace, or a two-person Jacuzzi tub. Don't sleep through the three-course breakfast. *1045 Easum Dr. ☎ 707/257-3717. www.candlelightinn.com. 10 units. Doubles $229–$369. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ **The Carneros Inn** NAPA This cluster of private residences epitomizes clean design. Its 27 acres (11 hectares) encompass vineyards, a spa, a good restaurant (p 72), and an infinity pool. *4048 Sonoma Hwy. (Hwy. 12). ☎ 707/299-4900. www.thecarnerosinn.com. 104 units. Doubles $435–$555. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★ **CasaLana** CALISTOGA If you're a gourmand, you'll be enticed by the hands-on cooking classes held here. Even if you're not, you'll be minutes from downtown in a country-style room with a private entrance. *1316 S. Oak St. ☎ 707/942-0615. www.casalana.com. 2 units. $189–$319. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ **Cedar Gables Inn** NAPA This Shakespeare-inspired 1892 manor's Renaissance-era artifacts mix with rich textures and colors. Rooms have whirlpool baths and fireplaces, and come with a three-course breakfast and an evening wine reception. Ask owners Ken and Susie Pope for a tour of the secret staircases. Three blocks from downtown. *486 Coombs St. ☎ 800/309-7969. www.cedargablesinn.com. 9 units. Doubles $156–$359. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★ **Chateau de Vie** CALISTOGA The "house of life" is a B&B on a small working winery (try the cabernet). Highlights include a generous breakfast, refined rooms, a pool, and a view of Mount St. Helena.

Tips for Choosing Lodging

Wine country differs from other tourist destinations in that its lodging options don't consist mainly of huge corporate hotel chains. In fact, many of the region's resorts, hotels, inns, B&Bs, and rentals are family-owned, with surprising personal touches attesting to that fact. How to choose where to stay should depend on you: If you're social and interested in an experience that involves meeting your innkeepers and mingling with other guests, go for a B&B. If you prefer anonymity and upscale amenities, choose a resort or a larger hotel. For complete seclusion (or if you're planning something like a small family reunion), a vacation rental is your best bet. Napa and Sonoma have many hundreds of wonderful lodgings, but this book's limited space prevents listing all of them—the ones on these pages, however, are either very prominent or highly recommended.

3250 Hwy. 128. ☎ 877/558-2513. www.cdvnapavalley.com. 4 units. Doubles $229–$429. AE, MC, V. Map p 116.

★★ **Churchill Manor** NAPA This B&B a few blocks from downtown is a beautiful 1889 Victorian mansion. Intricately decorated rooms feature vintage tubs and huge showers. Outside, there's a fountain courtyard, rose gardens, and a large veranda. Borrow a tandem bike before heading out. *485 Brown St. ☎ 800/799-7733. www.churchillmanor.com. 10 units. Doubles $175–$355. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ **Cottage Grove Inn** CALISTOGA Calm permeates these cottages set in an elm grove at the end of Calistoga's main strip. Relax by a fireplace or under a skylight in your room's two-person Jacuzzi tub. Furnishings are homey and cozy, and a stay includes breakfast and evening wine. *1711 Lincoln Ave. ☎ 800/799-2284. www.cottagegrove.com. 16 units. Doubles $250–$395. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★★ **The Cottages of Napa Valley** NAPA Originally a 1929 motel, this sheltered complex was remodeled to embody country-style chic. A stay here is gratifying, in part because of the amenities: a breakfast basket from Bouchon (p 92) and weekend wine receptions. Each comfortable cottage features a king-size bed, fireplace, kitchenette, Jacuzzi tub, and a front and back patio. *1012 Darms Lane. ☎ 707/252-7810. www.napacottages.com. 8 units. Cottages $255–$525. AE, MC, V. Map p 116.*

DoubleTree Hotel & Spa Napa Valley AMERICAN CANYON One of the world's eco-friendliest hotels, this DoubleTree is certified LEED Gold. Enjoy breakfast in bed, the spa, and the heated outdoor pool. Only thing is, it's a bit far from Napa's main attractions. If you stay here, rent a car (preferably a hybrid) and plan your itinerary accordingly. *3600 Broadway St. ☎ 707/674-2100. www.doubletree.hilton.com. 122 units. Doubles $105–$319. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★ **Dr. Wilkinson's Hot Springs Resort** CALISTOGA Calistoga's longest family-owned business (established 1952) still has character. A mud bath here is a must. Equally enjoyable are massages, facials, and mineral pools (p 103). Easy access to shops and restaurants. *1507 Lincoln Ave. ☎ 707/942-4102. www.drwilkinson.com. 42 units. Doubles $149–$299. AE, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ **1801 First Inn** NAPA Named for its downtown address, this Queen Anne Victorian blends contemporary touches with classic European decor. An in-house chef prepares delectable three-course breakfasts and gourmet hors d'oeuvres for evening wine tastings. *1801 1st St. ☎ 707/224-3739. www.1801first.com. 8 units. Doubles $299–$425. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

Embassy Suites NAPA Effort went into giving this chain a local feel. Touches include a swan pond with a wooden mill, a pool, and a large atrium where breakfast (included) is cooked to order and cocktails (also included) are served each evening. The suites' layout is such that the bedroom closes off from the living room, which is equipped with a pullout couch—meaning that a single reservation could work comfortably for two couples, or a family of four. *1075 California Blvd. ☎ 707/253-9540. www.embassysuitesnapahotel.com. 205 units. Doubles $179–$299. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ **Harvest Inn** ST. HELENA This upscale property offers rustic country charm, daily wine tastings, and gorgeous gardens. Breakfast is included, and many suites feature fireplaces, spa tubs, and private terraces. Try a treatment at the spa. *1 Main St.* ☎ *800/950-8466 or 707/963-9463. www.harvestinn.com. 74 units. Doubles $319–$629. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★ **Hennessey House** NAPA This downtown B&B's rooms are flowery. The main house is an 1889 Victorian and its six units are less pricey than the four in the Carriage House. A stay includes a sumptuous breakfast, afternoon tea, and evening wine. *1727 Main St.* ☎ *707/226-3774. www.hennesseyhouse.com. 10 units. Doubles $139–$319. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ **Indian Springs** CALISTOGA Deriving its name from Calistoga's past life as a Native American healing ground, this resort with comfortable bungalows is where you can detoxify in a volcanic-ash mud bath and soak in a naturally heated, thermal-geyser-fed mineral pool. *1712 Lincoln Ave.* ☎ *707/942-4913. www.indianspringscalistoga.com. 16 units. Doubles $185–$600. DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★ **La Belle Epoque** NAPA This plush B&B and its two-unit sister property across the street, the **Buckley House,** are century-old Queen Annes standing as stately testament to Napa's rich architectural history. Rooms boast elegant antiques and high-grade linens. Indulge in the candlelit breakfast and the nightly wine-and-cheese reception. *1386 Calistoga Ave.* ☎ *707/257-2161. www.napaboutiqueinn.com. 7 units. Doubles $169–$379. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★ **Lavender** YOUNTVILLE A homey 1870 B&B with wooden floors and French-style country furnishings, Lavender's small touches include lavender sachets, chocolate upon turndown, and afternoon snacks. Borrowing the inn's bicycles makes exploring fun (though attractions are within walking distance). *2020 Webber Ave.* ☎ *707/944-1388. www.lavendernapa.com. 8 units. Doubles $225–$325. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★ **Maison Fleurie** YOUNTVILLE The "flowering house" certainly is. This garden property offers rooms with country-style decor and stone fireplaces, breakfast each morning, and wine and hors d'oeuvres each afternoon. *6529 Yount St.* ☎ *707/944-2056. www.maisonfleurienapa.com. 13 units. Doubles $175–$300. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★★ **Meadowood Napa Valley** ST. HELENA This is Napa's top celebrity retreat, with prices to match. An exclusive Relais & Châteaux property and also a private club for local leaders, Meadowood is reminiscent of a grand country estate. Its highly personalized service, luxury spa, tennis courts, croquet lawns, pools, and golf course put it in a league of its own. Lodging is amid oaks in a private 250-acre (100-hectare) valley. *900 Meadowood Lane.* ☎ *707/963-3646. www.meadowood.com. 85 units. Doubles $575–$2,550. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★ **The Meritage Resort** NAPA The Meritage, 4 miles (6.4km) from downtown Napa in the Carneros region, claims the world's only underground-cave spa. Also here are wine caves, vineyards, and tastings. Siena restaurant's Tuscan cuisine accompanies a comprehensive wine list. Rooms have plasma TVs and fireplaces. *875 Bordeaux Way.* ☎ *866/370-6272. www.themeritageresort.com. 338 units. Doubles $215–$1,100. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

Meadowood in St. Helena is popular with presidents, celebrities—and anyone else willing to shell out a pretty penny.

★★★ **Milliken Creek Inn & Spa** NAPA This garden property is known for luxury and attention to detail. In the earth-toned rooms: king-size canopy beds, fireplaces, fresh orchids, and private decks with river views. Marble bathrooms feature hydrotherapy tubs and rain showers. Breakfast is gourmet, and vintners host an evening wine-and-cheese reception. Don't forego an aromatherapy massage at the spa. *1815 Silverado Trail.* ☎ *707/255-1197. www.millikencreekinn.com. 12 units. Doubles $350–$725. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ **Mount View Hotel** CALISTOGA Smallish, romantic rooms with European-style antiques are set in a downtown 1917 building. Highlights include a pool and Jacuzzi, a lobby fireplace, and **Stomp Restaurant**. Breakfast snacks are delivered each morning, and there's an on-site spa. *1457 Lincoln Ave.* ☎ *800/816-6877. www.mountviewhotel.com. 32 units. Doubles $239–$419. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★ **Napa River Inn** NAPA In the 1884 Napa Mill complex, this downtown inn overlooks the Napa River. Pet-friendly rooms feature historical, nautical, and country stylings. In-room breakfast service and two restaurants, **Celadon** and **Angèle** (p 72), are superb. *500 Main St.* ☎ *707/251-8500. www.napariverinn.com. 66 units. Doubles $199–$560. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★★ **Poetry Inn** NAPA Cliff Lede Vineyards (p 142) has Stags Leap District's only public lodging—and what lodging! Posh rooms sit 500 feet (150m) above the valley. Vineyard

A suite at Napa River Inn comes with a fireplace.

views are spectacular, decor is classy, and outdoor showers add to the uniqueness. At breakfast (included), try the brie-and-strawberry French toast, then enjoy an open-air massage, lounge by the pool, or marvel at the wine cellar's rarities. *6380 Silverado Trail.* ☎ *707/944-0646. www.poetryinn.com. 3 units. Doubles $460–$1,400. AE, DC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★ **Rancho Caymus Inn** RUTHERFORD This Spanish hacienda–style inn has a rich history, cozy-funky decor, and architecture that incorporates adobe fireplaces, 100-year-old timber, stucco walls, and clay tile. Amenities include breakfast and a romantic garden courtyard. Some rooms come with kitchenettes, whirlpool tubs, or private balconies. Pay the property's Italian restaurant, **Alex,** a visit. *1140 Rutherford Rd.* ☎ *800/845-1777. www.ranchocaymus.com. 26 units. Doubles $189–$399. AE, MC, V. Map p 116.*

Roman Spa Hot Springs Resort CALISTOGA Though this is a spa resort, rooms are modest. The surrounding grounds contain three mineral-water pools (two are on-site) and two Finnish saunas. *1300 Washington St.* ☎ *800/914-8957. www.romanspahotsprings.com. 60 units. Doubles $150–$525. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

Silverado Resort NAPA This resort is a country club, so it's great for golf (two courses) but lacks the intimacy of many other wine-country inns. Suites have kitchenettes and undersized bathrooms. Decor is low-key—more practical than aesthetic. Highlights include the spa and the **Grill.** *1600 Atlas Peak Rd.* ☎ *707/257-0200. www.silveradoresort.com. 280 units. Doubles $147–$610. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ **Solage** CALISTOGA Bright and airy, this luxury resort, open since 2007, stocks a world-class art collection, runs the Michelin-starred **Solbar** restaurant, offers mineral-water pools, and is in the process of getting LEED certified for its green efforts. Rooms are comfortable and come with the use of two cruiser bikes. *755 Silverado Trail.*

☎ 866/942-7442. www.solagecalistoga.com. 91 units. Doubles $350–$910. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.

★★ **Villagio Inn & Spa** YOUNTVILLE This fancy spot has a distinctly Mediterranean feel, from the water features to the Roman-style "ruins." Rooms are luxurious, and a stay comes with a bottle of Beringer and a superb breakfast buffet. Staffers are hospitable, and the spa's river-stone massage is highly recommended. *6481 Washington St. ☎ 707/944-8877. www.villagio.com. 138 units. Doubles $340–$775. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

Vintage Inn & Spa YOUNTVILLE Villagio's older downtown sister property has spacious rooms with generous tubs and balconies. Amenities like free wine and breakfast make guests feel welcome. Ask for a room overlooking Domaine Chandon. *6541 Washington St. ☎ 800/351-1133. www.vintageinn.com. 92 units. Doubles $340–$740. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★★ **Westin Verasa** NAPA Rooms here are so spacious, so extravagant, so chock-full of amenities that you might end up wanting to stay inside. But don't—the hotel sits right on the Napa River and is within walking distance of the town's best landmarks, including Oxbow Public Market (p 11) and 12 tasting rooms. It's also the home of **La Toque,** a Michelin-starred restaurant (p 72). *1314 McKinstry St. ☎ 707/257-1800. www.westinnapa.com. 180 suites. Doubles $340–$629. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

You may find it difficult to leave Villagio in Yountville.

Sonoma Lodging A to Z

★ **Applewood Inn** GUERNEVILLE This sweet 1922 mission revival–style mansion's rooms are individually decorated. Outside, there's a pool, hot tub, and organic herb garden for the on-site restaurant (a stay includes breakfast). It's a 2-minute drive to Main St., but feels forested and remote. *13555 Hwy. 116.* ☎ *707/869-9093. www.applewoodinn.com. 19 units. Doubles $195–$375. AE, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ **Beltane Ranch** GLEN ELLEN This B&B in a pastel-yellow 1892 manor has everything a country ranch should: clean, antiques-furnished rooms with private entrances (no TV or phone); a big, delectable breakfast; a wraparound porch; hiking trails; a tennis court; and lots of greenery. Enjoy the drive up from the highway and request an upstairs room with a view. *11775 Sonoma Hwy. (Hwy. 12).* ☎ *707/996-6501. www.beltaneranch.com. 6 units. Doubles $190–$240. MC, V. Map p 116.*

★ **Bungalows 313** SONOMA These private, spacious downtown cottages have kitchens, though a tasty breakfast is provided. There's also a fountain courtyard and the option of staying in the romantic 1906 brick house. Attention to detail reveals itself in small and large touches like fresh flowers and inviting interiors. *313 1st St. E.* ☎ *707/996-8091. www.bungalows313.com. 5 units. Cottages $160–$499. DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ **The Cottage Inn & Spa Mission B&B** SONOMA This beloved retreat proximal to Sonoma's mission incorporates Cal-Med architecture and gardens. Individually decorated rooms have private entrances, fireplaces, spa tubs, and big, comfy beds. Also included in your price are a pastries-and-fruit breakfast and access to a fitness club. *310 1st St. E.* ☎ *707/996-0719. www.cottageinnandspa.com. 8 units. Doubles $150–$415. DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ **Duchamp** HEALDSBURG If SFMOMA or LACMA were reimagined as small cottage retreats in wine country, they might look similar to this property, located just 1 block from Healdsburg's town center. Garden grounds contrast with modern interiors and co-owner Pat Lenz's whimsical sculptural art, which surrounds the pool area. Separate studio-sized units offer privacy (perfect for art world celebrities on the DL) and are impeccably designed and outfitted (nicer than the adjacent Healdsburg Modern Cottages, which Duchamp formerly owned). Breakfast included. *421 Foss St.* ☎ *707/431-1300. www.duchamphotel.com. 6 units. Doubles $350–$425. AE, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ **El Dorado Hotel** SONOMA El Dorado's strong points are its chic decor—more town than country—and excellent plaza location. Small but sunny rooms feature four-poster beds, fine linens, and small balconies. Outside, there's a heated lap pool. The hip **El Dorado Kitchen** (p 77) is a must-try; chef Ryan Fancher was formerly at The French Laundry. *405 1st St. W.* ☎ *800/289-3031. www.eldoradosonoma.com. 27 units. Doubles $165–$225. AE, DC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★★ **Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa** SONOMA Established in 1927, this Sonoma institution gets better with age. Its rooms are charming, and many have fireplaces. The mineral-water-fed spa is divine, as is the cuisine at upscale **Santé.** Though it's in a drab area 3 miles (4.8km) from Sonoma, you won't want to leave—the free wine tastings add to the desire to stay. The resort offers excursions like free hiking and biking tours and access to a nearby 18-hole golf course. ***100 Boyes Blvd.*** *☎ 707/938-9000. www.fairmont.com/sonoma. 226 units. Doubles $269–$1,500. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★ **The Gables Wine Country Inn** SANTA ROSA This cozy B&B looks like a dollhouse from the outside and, on the inside, a Victorian manor. Rooms feature claw-foot tubs and historical appointments. Enjoy the lavender garden and sample wine in the evening. Consider splurging on the quiet creekside cottage, which has a hot tub. ***4257 Petaluma Hill Rd.*** *☎ 800/422-5376 or 707/585-7777. www.thegablesinn.com. 8 units. Doubles $185–$260. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★★ **Gaige House Inn** GLEN ELLEN Though this creekside inn was built in 1890, it's gone through a major upgrade, which added eight Asian-themed suites with decor rivaling that of five-star hotels. The superb breakfast is served in a light-filled space by friendly attendants. There's also an in-house spa, plus a pool and hot tubs. ***13540 Arnold Dr.*** *☎ 800/935-0237. www.gaige.com. 23 units. Doubles $239–$679. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ **Grape Leaf Inn** HEALDSBURG Country chic (*very* chic) with stained-glass touches, this refined B&B is a century-old Queen Anne offering luxury amenities, soothing gardens, a standout four-course breakfast, cozy rooms with skylights, fireplaces, and spa tubs, and charming hospitality from its owners Richard and Kae. Richard hosts a nightly wine tasting at his bar (hidden behind a bookcase!), where you can meet the other guests. The

The Fairmont in Sonoma tempts with a pool, among many other amenities.

"Syrah" room is the priciest but features the inn's only steam shower. Ask about the vineyard cottages at nearby Rosenberg Estates. ***539 Johnson St.* ☎ *707/433-8140. www.grapeleafinn.com. 12 units. Doubles $265–$395. MC, V. Map p 116.***

★★ **h2hotel** HEALDSBURG This modern eco-oriented hotel, a sister property to Hotel Healdsburg (below), is the edgier, more youthful option of the two. Its older sibling may be sophisticated, but h2 is fun, with quirky design elements and a bar that rocks till late. ***219 Healdsburg Ave.* ☎ *707/922-5251. www.h2hotel.com. 36 units. Doubles $265–$465. MC, V. Map p 116.***

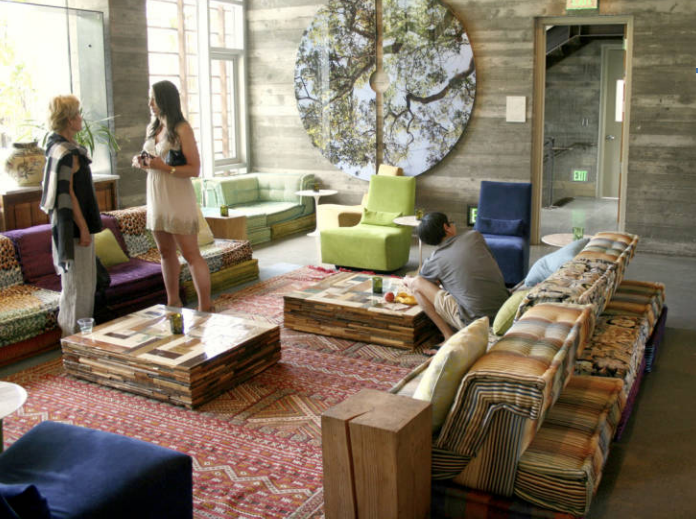
★ **Healdsburg Inn on the Plaza** HEALDSBURG Clean, comfortable rooms have high ceilings, fireplaces, and flourishes hearkening back to when the inn was built: 1901. A stay includes breakfast and afternoon wine. Since the inn is in the middle of town, request a room in the quieter back. ***112 Matheson St.* ☎ *800/431-8663. www.healdsburginn.com. 12 units. Doubles $295–$375. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.***

The Grape Leaf Inn in Healdsburg features a hidden basement wine bar and one of the best breakfasts we've had at a B&B.

★ **Healdsburg Modern Cottages** HEALDSBURG The name says it all (almost). These quaint, closely clustered cottages, just 1 block off the town plaza, have been livened with mustard-yellow doors and interiors inspired by modern designers—the "Charles" cottage is named after Charles Eames, "George" is named after George Nelson, and so on. Shared pool and hot tub on-site. Formerly owned by the adjacent Duchamp, above, these units are roomier, if not as elegant. Now managed by Barndiva (p 86), where you'll pick up your key. ***425 Foss St.* ☎ *866/964-0110. 4 units. Cottages $250–$500. AE, MC, V. Map p 116.***

★★★ **Honor Mansion** HEALDSBURG More than $1.5 million went into developing this property, resulting in an indulgent retreat. Plush suites in an Italianate Victorian building are surrounded by more than 120 rosebushes and a quarter-acre (.1-hectare) vineyard. Separate vineyard cottages feature private patios with soaking tubs. A talented chef culls herbs from on-site gardens to concoct a great breakfast buffet (included). Also outdoors are a lap pool, a jogging trail, a croquet lawn, a putting green, a massage table, and tennis, bocce, and basketball courts. ***891 Grove St.* ☎ *707/433-4277. www.honormansion.com. 13 units. Doubles $200–$700. AE, MC, V. Map p 116.***

★★ **Hotel Healdsburg** HEALDSBURG A modern option amid Healdsburg's more traditional properties, this $21-million hotel offers rooms with hardwood floors and Tibetan rugs, private balconies, deep bathtubs, and Frette linens. Outside, the pool and green lounging spaces



The h2hotel is one of several modern options in Healdsburg.

are a draw—and the cuisine is inspired at Charlie Palmer's **Dry Creek Kitchen** (p 86). At the small spa, try the Combination Massage. ***25 Matheson St. ☎ 707/431-2800. www.hotelhealdsburg.com. 55 units. Doubles $275–$510. MC, V. Map p 116.***

★★★ Hotel Les Mars HEALDSBURG The ultimate in old-Europe-style luxury. Gracious service awaits, as do elegant touches like Louis XV armoires, lavish four-poster beds, and Bain Ultra soaking tubs. A gourmet three-course breakfast and nightly cheese tastings are included. Alas, dinner at the property's two-Michelin-starred restaurant, **Cyrus,** isn't—but is well worth the splurge. ***27 North St. ☎ 707/433-4211. www.hotellesmars.com. 16 units. Doubles $500–$1,050. AE, MC, V. Map p 116.***

★ Inn at Ramekins SONOMA This B&B and culinary school is the perfect stay for foodies. Packages include a bottle of wine and discounts on the cooking classes that happen downstairs. The individually decorated rooms have antique pine furniture and oversized bathrooms. Breakfast features homemade granola and pastries. ***450 W. Spain St. ☎ 707/933-0450. www.ramekins.com. 6 units. Doubles $225–$325. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.***

★★ The Kenwood Inn & Spa KENWOOD Gorgeous mission-style architecture houses rooms with textured decor. Other features include fountain courtyards, a tasting room, three Jacuzzis, and a pool. Try a bath or facial at the "vinotherapy" spa. Though it's a bit close to Hwy. 12, it manages to maintain romance and privacy. Breakfast is included. ***10400 Sonoma Hwy. (Hwy. 12). ☎ 800/353-6966. www.kenwoodinn.com. 30 units. Doubles $350–$825. AE, MC, V. Map p 116.***

★★ Ledson Hotel SONOMA This perfectly located hotel built by a fifth-generation winemaker transports guests to a time when antiques were new. Grand decor and modern amenities come with excellent service. At the hotel's **Centre du Vin,** luxuriate by the fireplace while sipping wine, nibbling French food, and, on Saturday nights, hearing live music. ***480 1st St.***

E. ☎ 707/996-9779. www.ledsonhotel.com. 6 units. Doubles $350–$395. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.

★★ The Lodge at Sonoma SONOMA At this comfortable resort, an inviting lobby welcomes you before you retreat to a well-appointed room, suite, or cottage. A treatment at Raindance Spa invigorates, and a meal at **Carneros** surpasses even high expectations. *1325 Broadway. ☎ 707/935-6600. www.thelodgeatsonoma.com. 182 units. Doubles $219–$499. AE, DC, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ MacArthur Place SONOMA On one of Sonoma's main thoroughfares (so factor in some noise) is this country-style inn with pretty grounds. Breakfast is included, as is a wine-and-cheese reception in the library, where you can borrow a movie or book. Rooms are flowery and, if you upgrade to a suite, spacious. *29 E. MacArthur St. ☎ 707/938-2929. www.macarthurplace.com. 64 units. Doubles $275–$499. MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ Madrona Manor HEALDSBURG Step back into the Victorian era at this gorgeous, sprawling estate dating back to 1881. The 8-acre property has several units, offering a total of 22 rooms and 5 suites, some with fireplaces and balconies with bucolic views for miles. Rooms favor period detail (vintage books) over modern touches (there are no TVs). On-site you'll also find a heated pool, and a healthy large garden which fuels the manor's Michelin-starred restaurant, helmed by Chef Jesse Malgren. *1001 Westside Rd. ☎ 707/433-4231. www.madronamanor.com. 27 units. Doubles & cottages $220–$625. AE, MC, V. Map p 116.*

★★ Safari West Tent Camp SANTA ROSA Central to both valleys is this ultimate family getaway. The 400-acre (160-hectare) preserve, home to hundreds of African animals, offers a cluster of safari tents with hardwood floors. From each accommodation, guests can watch giraffes, zebras, and cheetahs. Breakfast is included, and the safari drive is a must-do (p 24). *3115 Porter Creek Rd. ☎ 707/579-2551. www.safariwest.com. 32 units. Doubles $200–$315. AE, MC, V. Map p 116.*

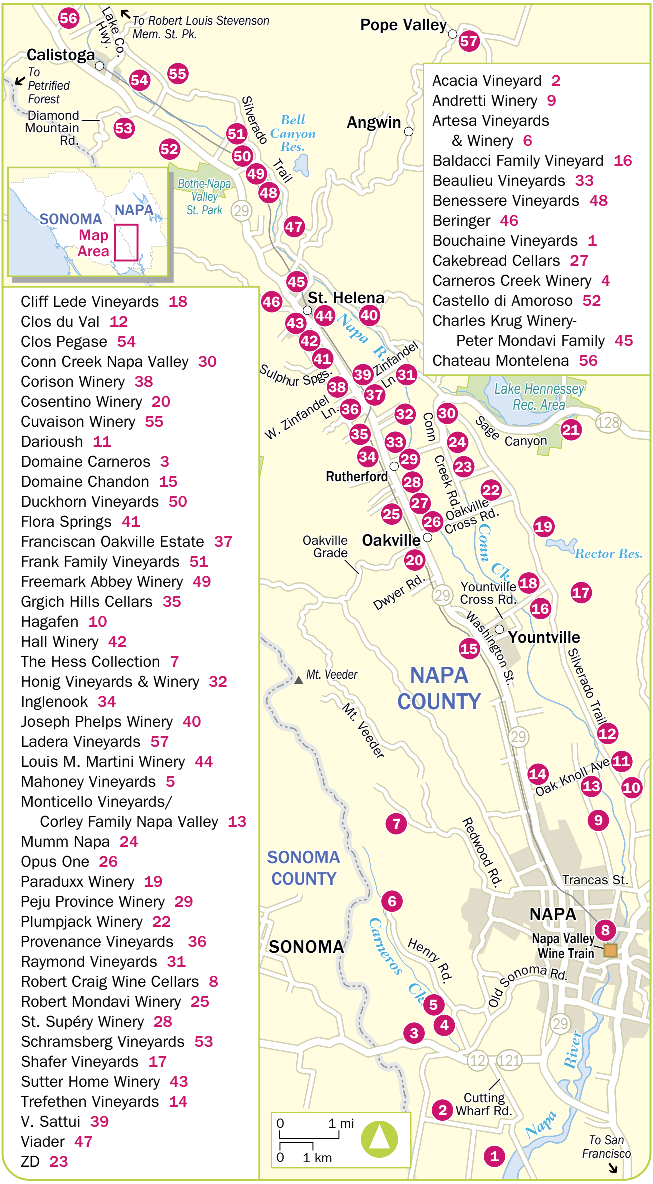
★ Villa Verotto CARNEROS Rent this elusive, exclusive, and exquisite vineyard estate and enjoy a pool, a hot tub, and three smartly decorated bedrooms. The owners of the gated property keep its address confidential until booking to ensure guests' privacy—but it's about 5 miles (8km) from Sonoma Plaza. ☎ *415/225-3027. www.verotto.com. 1 unit. Villa $600–$1,295. MC, V. Map p 116.*

Vine Hill Inn SEBASTOPOL Once an 1897 farmhouse, this romantic B&B still keeps a barn with chickens, goats, and a blind pony. Rooms have private decks, Jacuzzi tubs, hardwood floors, and warm decor. A tasty breakfast, swimming pool, and vineyards add to the appeal. *3949 Vine Hill Rd. ☎ 707/823-8832. www.vine-hill-inn.com. 4 units. Doubles $170. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 116.* ●

7

The Best Wineries

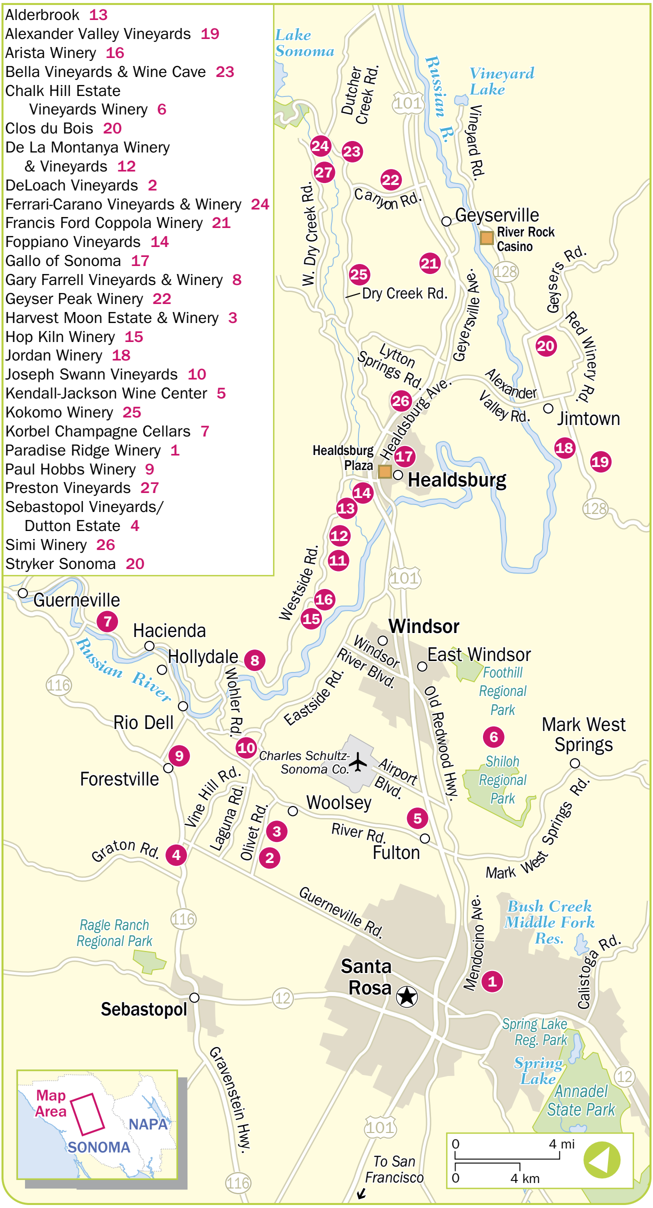
Napa Valley Wineries


To Robert Louis Stevenson Mem. St. Pk.
Lake Co. Hwy.
Calistoga
To Petrified Forest
Diamond Mountain Rd.
Pope Valley
Angwin
Silverado Trail
Bell Canyon Res.
Bothe-Napa Valley St. Park
SONOMA
NAPA
Map Area
St. Helena
Napa R.
Zinfandel Ln
Sulphur Spgs.
W. Zinfandel Ln.
Lake Hennessey Rec. Area
Sage Canyon
Conn Creek Rd.
Rutherford
Oakville Cross Rd.
Oakville Grade
Oakville
Conn Ck
Rector Res.
Dwyer Rd.
Yountville Cross Rd.
Washington St.
Yountville
Silverado Trail
Mt. Veeder
Mt. Veeder
NAPA COUNTY
Oak Knoll Ave
Redwood Rd.
SONOMA COUNTY
Trancas St.
NAPA
Napa Valley Wine Train
SONOMA
Carneros Ck.
Henry Rd.
Old Sonoma Rd.
River
Cutting Wharf Rd.
Napa
To San Francisco
0 1 mi
0 1 km
128
29
12
121

Acacia Vineyard	2
Andretti Winery	9
Artesa Vineyards & Winery	6
Baldacci Family Vineyard	16
Beaulieu Vineyards	33
Benessere Vineyards	48
Beringer	46
Bouchaine Vineyards	1
Cakebread Cellars	27
Carneros Creek Winery	4
Castello di Amoroso	52
Charles Krug Winery-Peter Mondavi Family	45
Chateau Montelena	56
Cliff Lede Vineyards	18
Clos du Val	12
Clos Pegase	54
Conn Creek Napa Valley	30
Corison Winery	38
Cosentino Winery	20
Cuvaison Winery	55
Darioush	11
Domaine Carneros	3
Domaine Chandon	15
Duckhorn Vineyards	50
Flora Springs	41
Franciscan Oakville Estate	37
Frank Family Vineyards	51
Freemark Abbey Winery	49
Grgich Hills Cellars	35
Hagafen	10
Hall Winery	42
The Hess Collection	7
Honig Vineyards & Winery	32
Inglenook	34
Joseph Phelps Winery	40
Ladera Vineyards	57
Louis M. Martini Winery	44
Mahoney Vineyards	5
Monticello Vineyards/Corley Family Napa Valley	13
Mumm Napa	24
Opus One	26
Paraduxx Winery	19
Peju Province Winery	29
Plumpjack Winery	22
Provenance Vineyards	36
Raymond Vineyards	31
Robert Craig Wine Cellars	8
Robert Mondavi Winery	25
St. Supéry Winery	28
Schramsberg Vineyards	53
Shafer Vineyards	17
Sutter Home Winery	43
Trefethen Vineyards	14
V. Sattui	39
Viader	47
ZD	23

Previous page: Paul Ahvenainen, Director of Winemaking at Korbel, pours you a glass of bubbly.

Northern Sonoma Wineries



Alderbrook	13
Alexander Valley Vineyards	19
Arista Winery	16
Bella Vineyards & Wine Cave	23
Chalk Hill Estate Vineyards Winery	6
Clos du Bois	20
De La Montanya Winery & Vineyards	12
DeLoach Vineyards	2
Ferrari-Carano Vineyards & Winery	24
Francis Ford Coppola Winery	21
Foppiano Vineyards	14
Gallo of Sonoma	17
Gary Farrell Vineyards & Winery	8
Geyser Peak Winery	22
Harvest Moon Estate & Winery	3
Hop Kiln Winery	15
Jordan Winery	18
Joseph Swann Vineyards	10
Kendall-Jackson Wine Center	5
Kokomo Winery	25
Korbel Champagne Cellars	7
Paradise Ridge Winery	1
Paul Hobbs Winery	9
Preston Vineyards	27
Sebastopol Vineyards/ Dutton Estate	4
Simi Winery	26
Stryker Sonoma	20

Lake Sonoma
Dutcher Creek Rd.
101
Russian R.
Vineyard Lake
Vineyard Rd.
24
23
27
22
Canyon Rd.
W. Dry Creek Rd.
Geyserville
River Rock Casino
21
25
Dry Creek Rd.
128
Geysers Rd.
Geyserville Ave.
Red Winery Rd.
20
Lytton Springs Rd.
Alexander Valley Rd.
26
Healdsburg Ave.
Jimtown
Healdsburg Plaza
17
18
19
Healdsburg
14
13
128
12
11
Westside Rd.
101
Guerneville
16
15
7
Windsor
Hacienda
Windsor River Blvd.
East Windsor
Hollydale
8
Russian River
Foothill Regional Park
116
Wohler Rd.
Eastside Rd.
Old Redwood Hwy.
Rio Dell
Mark West Springs
6
10
9
Charles Schultz-Sonoma Co.
Airport Blvd.
Shiloh Regional Park
Forestville
Vine Hill Rd.
Woolsey
Laguna Rd.
Olivet Rd.
3
River Rd.
5
Mark West Springs Rd.
Graton Rd.
4
2
Fulton
Guerneville Rd.
116
Mendocino Ave.
Bush Creek Middle Fork Res.
Ragle Ranch Regional Park
Calistoga Rd.
Santa Rosa
1
12
Sebastopol
Spring Lake Reg. Park
Spring Lake
12
Annadel State Park
Gravenstein Hwy.
Map Area
NAPA
SONOMA
101
To San Francisco
116
0
4 mi
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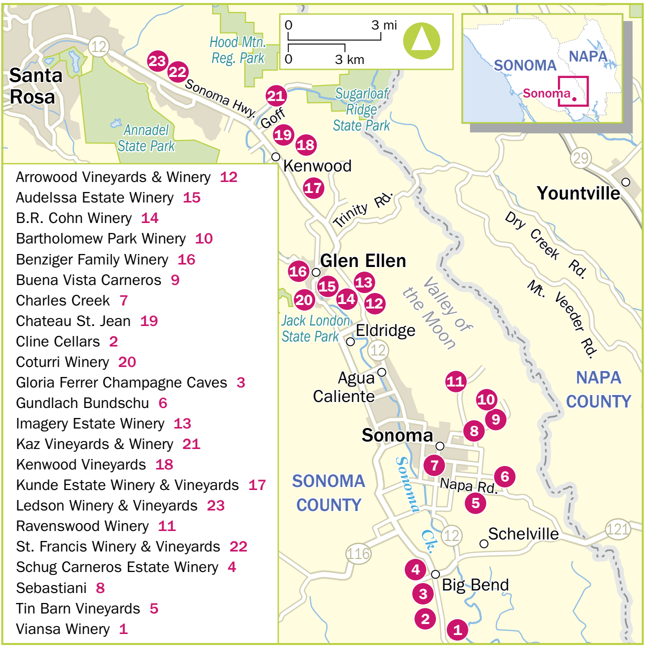
Sonoma Valley Wineries


0 3 mi
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SONOMA
NAPA
Sonoma
Santa Rosa
12
23
22
Sonoma Hwy.
Hood Mtn. Reg. Park
21
Goff
Sugarloaf Ridge State Park
19
18
Annadel State Park
Kenwood
17
Trinity Rd.
29
Yountville
Dry Creek Rd.
Mt. Veeder Rd.
Glen Ellen
16
15
13
20
14
12
Jack London State Park
Eldridge
Valley of the Moon
Agua Caliente
11
10
9
8
NAPA COUNTY
Sonoma
7
6
Napa Rd.
5
SONOMA COUNTY
Sonoma Ck.
Schelville
121
116
4
Big Bend
3
2
1

Arrowood Vineyards & Winery	12
Audelssa Estate Winery	15
B.R. Cohn Winery	14
Bartholomew Park Winery	10
Benziger Family Winery	16
Buena Vista Carneros	9
Charles Creek	7
Chateau St. Jean	19
Cline Cellars	2
Coturri Winery	20
Gloria Ferrer Champagne Caves	3
Gundlach Bundschu	6
Imagery Estate Winery	13
Kaz Vineyards & Winery	21
Kenwood Vineyards	18
Kunde Estate Winery & Vineyards	17
Ledson Winery & Vineyards	23
Ravenswood Winery	11
St. Francis Winery & Vineyards	22
Schug Carneros Estate Winery	4
Sebastiani	8
Tin Barn Vineyards	5
Viansa Winery	1

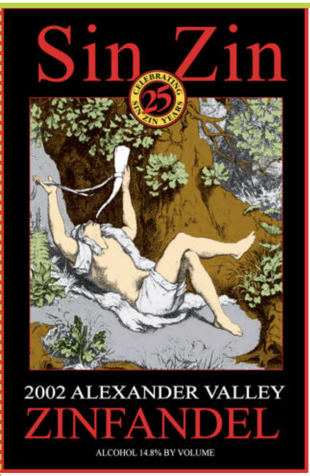
Wineries A to Z

A note about our winery labels: *ORG* wineries use organic grapes; *BIO* refers to biodynamic practices; *SUST* indicates a winery's commitment to sustainability; and *SULF* wines have no added sulfites.

Acacia Vineyard NAPA Founded in 1979 in the famous Carneros region, Acacia specializes in dark pinot noir and chardonnay. Bring your camera into the tasting room: Because it's 2 miles (3.2km) from San Francisco's San Pablo Bay, you'll want to snap shots of the water views. *2750 Las Amigas Rd., Napa.* ☎ *877/226-1700. www.acaciavineyard.com. By appt. Mon–Sat 10am–4pm, Sun noon–4pm. Tours ($30, including tastings) by appt. Mon–Fri 11am. Tastings: $15–$20 (By appt. only; last tasting at 3:30pm). North on Calif. 121, then right on Duhig Rd., left on Las Amigas Rd. Map p 132.*

Alderbrook SONOMA For a rural winery, Alderbrook is remarkably close to Healdsburg Plaza, so it's a great place for a serene wine-accented picnic away from the throngs—especially if you want a view to remember. Visitors can buy wine and specialty food items (think fruity chardonnay or dark, dry Carignane paired with fresh French bread) in the laid-back tasting room. If it's windy out, stay in the tasting room to absorb the fireplace's heat. *2306 Magnolia Dr., Healdsburg.* ☎ *800/405-5987. www.alderbrook.com. Daily 10am–5pm (closed major holidays). Tours: $15 daily 11am. Tastings: $10, refunded with purchase. Hwy. 101 S., exit Westside, turn right. Map p 133.*

Alexander Valley Vineyards SONOMA *SUST* This estate, now owned by the Wetzel family, was once the property of Cyrus Alexander (yes, as in Alexander Valley). The Wetzels bought the land from the Alexanders and, in 1975, "AVV" was born. The winery, on the Russian River, makes for a perfect picnic spot—views of Sonoma Valley are superb from here. Try their award-winning Cyrus (a cab-dominated blend) or their zinfandels, Redemption Zin and Sin Zin; the latter was an instant sensation and is their cult wine. *8644 Hwy. 128, Healdsburg.* ☎ *800/888-7209. www.avvwine.com. Daily 10am–5pm. Free tours of winery and wine caves 11am & 2pm, by appt. Tastings: $10 (refunded with purchase; free tasting coupon on website). 6 miles (9.7km) northeast of Healdsburg. Map p 133.*



Try Sin Zin, the cult wine from Alexander Valley Vineyards.

Andretti Winery NAPA Andretti is a Northern Italian–style winery founded by race-car driving champion Mario Andretti in 1996. Despite the celebrity cachet, the staff here couldn't be more down-to-earth. Ask them anything about Napa; they're likely to be able to answer. Tastings take place in a Tuscan villa, adjacent to which is an outdoor patio where visitors take in views of vineyards and mountains while sipping a light, zesty chardonnay or a richer cabernet sauvignon. *4162 Big Ranch Rd., Napa.* ☎ *888/460-8463. www.andrettiwinery.com. Daily 10am–5pm (closed major holidays). Tastings: $15. Hwy. 29 north, then right onto Oak Knoll Rd., then right on Big Ranch Rd. Map p 132.*

Arista Winery SONOMA *BIO, SUST* Known for their small lots of pinot noir and bone-dry gewürztraminer, this family-owned boutique winery recently opened a hospitality center. There, visitors stroll through beautiful Japanese water gardens and gaze at century-old oaks while tasting wine. Picnic spots are available, and a midweek visit is best to avoid crowds. *7015 Westside Rd., Healdsburg.* ☎ *707/473-0606. www.aristawinery.com. Daily 11am–5pm; Tues & Wed by appt. No tours. Tastings: free for appellation wines, $10 for single-vineyard pinot noirs (fee refunded with wine purchase). From Healdsburg, take Westside Rd. west for about 8 miles (13km). Map p 133.*

★ **Arrowood Vineyards & Winery** SONOMA *ORG, SUST* More than 20 years ago, a married couple founded Arrowood on a hillside overlooking Sonoma. Today, visitors savor samples of the handcrafted cabernets Arrowood is known for in its Hospitality House. The sun-dappled tasting room has a spacious balcony from which sippers can see Sonoma Mountain. Choose from two tours: the 40-minute overview or the in-depth 90-minute vineyard and cellar tour. Both end with tastings. ***14347 Sonoma Hwy. (Hwy. 12), Glen Ellen. ☎ 800/938-5170. www.arrowoodvineyards.com. Daily 10am–4:30pm. Tours ($20–$30, including tastings) daily at 10:30am & 1:30pm, by appt. Tastings: $10–$15 (refunded with purchase) or by the glass. Map p 134.***

★★ **Artesa Vineyards & Winery** NAPA *SUST* Art and architecture strike first when encountering this winery; its modern semi-pyramid structure and stakelike sculptures impress, as do arching fountains, a water-centric courtyard, and a stark tasting room. But do the wines live up to the arresting visuals? Yes, especially the chardonnay and pinot noir. Peruse the Carneros Center, which documents the region's history, or the museum, with displays of ancient winemaking tools. ***1345 Henry Rd., Napa. ☎ 707/224-1668. www.artesawinery.com. Daily 10am–5pm (last tasting 4:30pm). Tours $20 daily 11am & 2pm. Tastings: $10–$15; specialty tastings and tours: $45–$75. From Hwy. 12, turn left on Old Sonoma Rd., then left on Dealy Lane, which becomes Henry Rd. Map p 132.***

Audelssa/Navillus Birney Winery & Vineyards SONOMA This small, family-owned operation (formerly Sullivan Birney) runs a cute country-style storefront tasting room 2 miles (3.2km) from the winery. On display are artifacts documenting Glen Ellen's history and photos of authors Jack London and M. F. K. Fisher. Try the chardonnay, pinot noir, and syrah. ***13750 Arnold Dr., Glen Ellen. ☎ 707/933-8514. www.audelssa.com. Daily 11am–5pm. Tasting: $15 (no appt. needed); $40 salon tasting (by appt. only). From Sonoma Hwy. N., turn left onto Arnold Dr. Map p 134.***

A fountain at Artesa Vineyards & Winery.

Baldacci Family Vineyards NAPA *SUST* Tom and Brenda Baldacci founded their winery in 1998 with the notion of sharing wine with friends and family; hence the reason many of their hand-farmed creations are named after relatives. Try Elizabeth, a pinot noir that shares a name with Tom's mother—but don't miss the winery's signature cabernet. ***6236 Silverado Trail, Napa. ☎ 707/944-9261. www.baldaccivineyards.com. Daily 10am–4pm (by appt.). Book several weeks in advance for a tour (free with tasting). Tastings: $15 (refunded with wine purchase); $40 reserve tasting. Map p 132.***

Bartholomew Park Winery SONOMA *ORG* "Bart Park" is more than a winery; it's a full destination with a museum, memorial park, picnic grounds, and hiking trails. If you're here solely for tasting, you'll be satisfied with the limited-production single-vineyard wines, particularly the much-honored 2001 cabernet sauvignon (it took gold in two major competitions). If you're in a learning mood, check out **Bartholomew Park Museum,** which chronicles the property's whimsical history. But if you're feeling energetic, hit the trails. All 3 miles (4.8km) of them are well-marked and beautiful. On a clear day, you can see all the way to San Francisco. *1000 Vineyard Lane, Sonoma.* ☎ *707/935-9511. www.bartholomewparkwinery.com. Daily 11am–4:30pm (closed major holidays). Tours $20 (Fri–Sat 11:30am). Tastings: $5. From Hwy. 12, turn right on E. Napa St., then left on 7th St. E., then slight right on Castle Rd. and follow it around to the winery's gates. Map p 134.*

★★ **Beaulieu Vineyard** NAPA *SUST* This renowned winery was founded in 1900 by Frenchman and Napa pioneer Georges de Latour. Today, the vintage named in his honor—Georges de Latour Private Reserve Cabernet—is the company's benchmark and resides in every serious collector's cellar. In the Reserve Room, guests sample this and older selections. For a more pedestrian (and crowded) experience, the understated main tasting room offers a flight of five of the winery's staple wines. ***Fun fact:*** Beaulieu's wines have been served by every American president since FDR. *1960 St. Helena Hwy., Rutherford.* ☎ *707/967-5233. www.bvwines.com. Mon–Fri 10am–5pm (closed major holidays). Tours $20 historic tour and barrel tasting, daily 11am & 2:30pm (by appt.). Tastings start at $15. Hwy. 101 N. Exit at Hwy. 37, then north on Calif. 121. Map p 132.*

★★ **Bella Vineyards** SONOMA Do yourself a favor—call ahead for a cave tour at Bella. No, not a vineyard tour, a cave tour. Why? Because you'll see mysterious arched doors built into the hillside when you pull up to the unassuming, barnlike tasting room. After a few sips of hearty, spicy old-vine zinfandel, you'll ask the staff about the doors. They tell you that behind the doors, flanked by old olive trees, are caves housing barrels and underground function rooms. During the tour, you'll feel cozy thanks to well-placed mood lighting and big, sturdy wood tables filling the winding caverns. You'll be so happy you stopped by this small, family-run winery (named Bella as an ode to the owners' two young daughters) in the heart of Dry Creek Valley that you'll leave plotting a way to

Take a ride on the Pinzaguer at Bella Vineyards in Dry Creek Valley.

schedule your next party underground, in these wine caves. *9711 W. Dry Creek Rd., Healdsburg.* ☎ ***866/572-3552 or 707/473-9171. www.bellawinery.com. Daily 11am–4:30pm. Tours: $20–$55 (cave, vineyard, or ultimate Pinzgauer tours; daily 10:30am, Fri–Sun 1:30pm by reservation with 1-week advance notice). Tastings: $7–$10 (no reservation needed); private cave or patio tastings with meal ($35, reservation required). Map p 133.***

Benessere Vineyards NAPA *SUST* *Benessere* is the Italian word for well-being, and that's certainly the feeling one gets from being here. This 42-acre (17-hectare) country estate is known for its small lots of Italian-inspired wines, many of which come from sangiovese grapes; try Phenomenon—its makers deem it "the pinnacle of winemaking at Benessere." Visit Monday through Wednesday, when the tasting room is least crowded. ***1010 Big Tree Rd., St. Helena.*** ☎ ***707/963-5853. www.benesserevineyards.com. Daily 10am–5pm by appt. Tours by appt. Tastings: $15 (refunded with 3-bottle wine purchase) by appt. Hwy. 29 N., then right on Big Tree Rd. Map p 132.***

Benziger's Tribute wine is a Bordeaux-style blend made entirely from estate grapes (grown on-site).

Beringer is Napa's oldest continually operating winery.

★ **Benziger Family Winery** SONOMA *BIO, SULF, SUST* A highlight here is the 45-minute tractor-drawn tram tour. Sit back as a knowledgeable driver maneuvers through the estate's hilly vineyards and discusses how vines get turned into wines. Tours are first-come, first-served, so stop by in the morning to buy afternoon tickets. The winery also has a peacock aviary, rose gardens, picnic grounds, and the educational **Vineyard Discovery Center.** The tasting room, where visitors taste current and special releases, is in a German-style mansion. ***1883 London Ranch Rd., Glen Ellen.*** ☎ ***888/490-2739. www.benziger.com. 10am–5pm. Tram tours ($15) daily every 30 min. from 11am–3:30pm. Tastings: $10–$30 (includes logo glass). Calif. 121 N. becomes Arnold Dr., then left onto London Ranch Rd. Map p 134.***

★★ **Beringer Vineyards** NAPA *SULF* Whoever knows Napa knows Beringer. Established in 1876 by German brothers Jacob and Frederick Beringer, it's Napa's oldest continually operating winery (the Beringers finagled survival during Prohibition by making sacramental wine). That distinction earned it a spot on the National Register of Historic Places. In 1934, the brothers pioneered the idea of public winery tours, and their namesake winery has since perfected their brainchild. Now there are four tour options ranging from a basic introduction to a thorough exploration of Beringer's vintage legacy. In summer, try a seasonal white, but the Knights Valley Cabernet Sauvignon is sublime in any season. *2000 Main St., St. Helena. ☎ 707/967-4412. www.beringer.com. Daily 10am–6pm (until 5pm in winter). Tours ($25–$40) daily 10:30am–4pm. Tastings: $20–$40. Hwy. 29 N. through St. Helena. Turn left into Beringer Vineyards. Map p 132.*

Bouchaine Vineyards NAPA *SUST* Carneros's oldest continuously operated winery presents tastings of its burgundy-inspired creations in its **Wine Visitor Center.** Try the pinot noir and chardonnay, as well as the more exclusive wines sold only here. After tasting, step out onto the terrace, where an endless vineyard view awaits. *1075 Buchli Station Rd., Napa. ☎ 800/654-9463. www.bouchaine.com. Daily 10:30am–5:30pm (4:30pm Nov to mid-March). Tours: $35 at 10:30am daily, by appt. Tastings: $15–$35. Hwy. 101 N. Exit at Hwy. 37, then north on Calif. 121. Map p 132.*

B.R. Cohn Winery SONOMA Founded in 1984 by Bruce Cohn, this estate winery specializes in fine cabernet and merlot. And since there are olive trees all over the property, the winery also produces gourmet oils and vinegars. The tasting room may be small, but the flavors are big, especially if you're trying the merlots. Cohn, interestingly, is the Doobie Brothers' longtime band manager. His other job inspired the Doobie Red wine series, as well as many musical events at the winery (check the website for the schedule). *15000 Sonoma Hwy. (Hwy. 12), Glen Ellen. ☎ 800/330-4064. www.brcohn.com. Daily 10am–5pm. Tastings: $10 (fee waived with wine purchase); seasonal special pairings $25, by appt. Hwy. 121 N. to Hwy. 12 N.; winery is 5 miles (8km) north of Sonoma Plaza. Map p 134.*

★★ Buena Vista Carneros SONOMA Not many wineries can boast that their tasting room is a California Historical Landmark—but then again, Buena Vista is America's oldest continuously operating winery and the birthplace of California's wine industry. Founded in 1857 by Hungarian colonel Agoston Haraszthy, it still has that delightful old-world feel: ivy-covered buildings, antique fountains, and a restored 1862 press house that houses the tasting room. Try the highly rated Estate Vineyard Series, a near-perfect selection of chardonnay and pinot noir. Picnic grounds are gorgeous here. *18000 Old*

Bruce Cohn is the Doobie Brothers' band manager. Watch for musical events at the winery.

B.R. COHN
Olive Hill Estate Vineyards
SONOMA VALLEY
WINERY

Winery Rd., Sonoma. ☎ 800/926-1266. www.buenavistacarneros.com. Daily 10am–5pm (closed major holidays). Free self-guided tours all day ($20–$30; check website for special events). Tastings: $10 & up. Calif. 121 N. to Napa St. and turn right. Take Napa St. to Old Winery Rd. Map p 134.

Cakebread Cellars NAPA A small, independent winery with handcrafted wines, Cakebread is known for its chardonnay and cabernet. When Jack and Dolores Cakebread founded it with $2,500 in 1973, they wanted to encourage people to incorporate wine and food into a healthy lifestyle. They've stuck to that goal and now offer a variety of wine and culinary education programs. The tasting area shares space with immense fermenting tanks. *8300 St. Helena Hwy. (Hwy. 29), Rutherford. ☎ 800/588-0298. www.cakebread.com. Daily 10am–4pm. Tours $25 10:30am daily (reservations required). Tastings: $15 (by appt.). Map p 132.*

Castello di Amoroso CALISTOGA A breathtaking Tuscan-inspired castle—you'll feel like you stepped into a fairy tale. The winery opened in 2007, the brainchild of well-known vintner Daryl Sattui. It offers 17 Italian-style wines, including pinot noir, merlot, and dessert varietals. The 121,000-square-foot (11,241-sq.-m) castle encompasses 107 rooms, a moat, a drawbridge, a torture chamber (!), a knight's chamber, and a chapel. A horse-drawn tour of the vineyards is available, by reservation only, for $69 (four people maximum; weekends Apr–Oct & Sun in Nov). *4045 N. St. Helena Hwy., Calistoga. ☎ 707/967-6272. www.castellodiamorosa.com. Daily 9:30am–6pm (5pm in winter). Admission: $18–$28 (tastings included; no reservation required), $8 ages 8–20 (juice tasting included). Tours include barrel tasting Mon–Fri 9:30am–4:30pm (5pm in summer) $33–$69; $23 ages 5–20 (by reservation only).*

The barrels of Buena Vista Carneros.

Chalk Hill Estate Vineyards and Winery SONOMA *SUST* Of the estate's 1,200 acres (480 hectares), only 350 (140 hectares) support vineyards. The rest encompass winery buildings and a wilderness preserve—but that doesn't mean the wines aren't great. Selections include rich chardonnay, cabernet, merlot, sauvignon blanc, and pinot gris. Embark on the culinary tour and tasting, which turns out to be an educational ramble through chef Didier Ageorges's organic culinary garden. *10300 Chalk Hill Rd., Healdsburg. ☎ 707/657-4837. www.chalkhill.com. Daily 10am–4pm. Tours: $30 estate tour Mon–Sat 11am & 1pm; culinary tour $75 Tues, Thurs & Fri 2pm; equestrian tour, call for availability; estate luncheon $175 (all require reservation). Tastings: $15 (no appt. necessary). Hwy. 101 N. Exit at Shiloh, turn right. Then left on Old Redwood Hwy., right on Pleasant, left on Chalk Hill Rd. Map p 133.*

Charles Creek SONOMA Though its vineyards are scattered through wine country, this winery's tasting room is operated out of a storefront on Sonoma Plaza. Can't decide which of the handcrafted wines to taste? Charles Creek is known for its chardonnay, cabernet, and merlot. There's always local art on display and the room's *pièce de résistance*—aside from its artisan wines—is a cow sculpture made entirely of wine corks. ***483 1st St. W., Sonoma.* ☎ *707/935-3848. www.charlescreek.com. Daily 11am–6pm. No tours. Tastings: $5 (waived with purchase). Hwy. 12 to Sonoma Plaza. Map p 134.***

★ **Charles Krug Winery—Peter Mondavi Family** NAPA *ORG* One of only three Napa wineries deemed a California Historical Landmark (the other two are Beringer and Schramsberg), this is the county's oldest working winery. It was founded in 1861 by Prussian immigrant Charles Krug, the first to make commercial wine in Napa. The Mondavi family bought the estate in 1943 and has operated it since. They opened the valley's first tasting room, where, over a bar made of redwood wine tanks, visitors taste the winery's signature bordeaux varietals. There's also opportunity to try rare ports and 20-plus-year-old wines. ***2800 Main St. (Hwy. 29), St. Helena.* ☎ *707/967-2220. www.charleskrug.com. Daily 10:30am–5pm (closed major holidays). Tours currently unavailable during winery redevelopment. Tastings: $15–$25; barrel tastings Fri–Sun 2–4:30pm (no reservation needed). Certain tastings are free for Napa County residents with ID and 4 guests. Hwy. 101 N. to Hwy. 37 E., then north on Calif. 12 to Hwy. 29 N. Map p 132.***

★ **Chateau Montelena** NAPA This place really is a château, complete with an immense 1882 stone castle. At the base of Mount St. Helena, it overlooks wildlife-laden Jade Lake and a Chinese garden. The entertaining tour starts with a video introduction, includes the vineyard and cellar, and ends up in the Estate Room for a vintage tasting. On the edifice's highest floor is another cavernous tasting room where non-tour visitors sample less rare wines. The chardonnay is the most acclaimed, but there are also cabernet and Riesling. ***1429 Tubbs Lane, Calistoga.* ☎ *707/942-5105. www.montelena.com. Daily 9:30am–4pm (except major holidays & 3rd Sat in May). Vineyard tours: $30, Mon & Wed 10:30am (first-come, first-served). Tastings: $20–$40. Hwy. 29 to Tubbs Lane (hard to find, so call for specific directions). Map p 132.***

The Carriage House at Charles Krug.

Chateau Montelena's ivy-covered facade.

★ **Chateau St. Jean** SONOMA At Sugarloaf State Park's edge, these elegant grounds include European-style gardens with colorful flora and a 19th-century fountain that's a sculpture of St. John himself. There's also a gourmet food shop, picnic space, and a welcoming visitor center. Taste winemaker Margo van Staaveren's chardonnay, cabernet, and gewürztraminer before exploring the 1920 château—it's so precisely restored that it made the National Trust for Historic Preservation. If you've ever dismissed merlot as being too passé for you, this is the place at which to fall in love with it. *8555 Sonoma Hwy. (Hwy. 12), Kenwood.* ☎ *707/833-4134. www.chateaustjean.com. Daily 10am–5pm. Tastings: $15–$35 ($50 boxed lunch tasting). Hwy. 101 N. Exit at Hwy. 12 E. and follow for 12 miles (19km). Map p 134.*

★ **Cliff Lede Vineyards** NAPA This art-rich winery was born when Canadian Cliff Lede bought S. Anderson Vineyard in 2002. The tasting room, in a century-old stone pump house, is where to try Lede's bordeaux-focused varietals and the sparkling wines that still bear the S. Anderson name. Meticulously landscaped gardens are graced with rosebushes and sculptures by artists like Keith Haring. A new winemaking facility opened in 2005, and the former winery is now a modern-art gallery. Cliff Lede also offers Stags Leap District's only public lodging: the lovely Poetry Inn (p 123). *1473 Yountville Cross Rd., Yountville.* ☎ *707/944-8642. www.cliffledevineyards.com. Daily 10am–4pm. Tours subject to change; call for schedules and pricing. Tastings: $20. Silverado Trail north, then left on Yountville Cross Rd. Map p 132.*

Wannabe Winemakers

Ever dream of being a vintner? At Judd's Hill Micro-Crush (☎ 707/255-2322 ; www.napamicrocrush.com), *you* get to make the wine. And not only that: You can also help with picking, sorting, and crushing—you can even choose your own label. To spend a week learning how to make your own sparkling-wine varietal, head to **Camp Schramsberg** (☎ 800/877-3623; www.schramsberg.com).

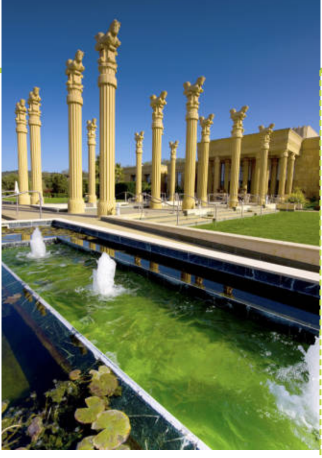
Cline Cellars SONOMA *SUST, SULF* This family-owned winery in the Carneros district has its tasting room in an 1850s farmhouse. With six ponds and more than 5,000 rosebushes, it's a beautiful place to sample zinfandel and Rhônestyle wines, such as the Marsanne-Roussanne blend. ***24737 Arnold Dr. (Hwy. 121), Sonoma. ☎ 707/940-4000. www.clinecellars.com. Daily 10am–6pm (closed Christmas). Free tours daily 11am, 1 & 3pm. Tastings: free (or for reserves, $1 per taste). Hwy. 101 N. Exit at Hwy. 37, then north on Calif. 121. Map p 134.***

★ **Clos du Bois** SONOMA *SUST* Clos du Bois—French for "enclosure in the woods" or "vineyard of drink," depending on the translation—produces France-style varietals. On campus are *pétanque* courts (bocce ball for Francophiles) and a picnic area with gazebos. The educational 45-minute tour shows winemaking in progress, demonstration vineyards, and examples of Clos du Bois's sustainable-farming techniques. The best part: wine samples right from barrels. The tour ends with a reserve tasting, during which you may be lucky enough to sample the wine under the Marlstone label—though it's just Clos du Bois's fancy way of saying "meritage," these are still some of the most complex flavors around. ***19410 Geyserville Ave., Geyserville. ☎ 800/222-3189. www.closdubois.com. Daily 10am–4:30pm (closed major holidays). Tours ($35, includes souvenir glass and wine tasting) twice daily by appt. Tastings: $10 (no appt. necessary). Hwy. 101 N. Exit at Independence Lane, then left on Geyserville Ave. Map p 133.***

Sip some zin by one of Cline Cellars' six ponds.

Chateau St. Jean is available for weddings and other catered gigs.

★ **Clos du Val** NAPA Co-founded in 1972 by a Frenchman who scoured the world for the best winery spot, Clos du Val is known for its cabernet, so try it in the rustic tasting room. A one-time fermentation chamber, it has a high, vaulted ceiling and terra-cotta walls. Double doors in the back enable guests to see steel tanks fermenting the pinot noir this establishment's known for. Outside, there's a rose garden, two picnic areas, and a *pétanque* court. ***5330 Silverado Trail, Napa. ☎ 707/261-5200. www.closduval.com. Daily***



The pillars of Darioush, along the Silverado Trail.

10am–5pm. Customized tours by 24-hr. advance appt. (includes tasting). Tastings: $15 for regular tasting (waived with purchase), $20 for mixed tasting; $25 for reserve tasting (includes souvenir glass); $50 for romance package (private olive-grove tasting with chocolate and roses). Map p 132.

★★ **Clos Pegase** NAPA Book publisher Jan Shrem bought these vineyards in 1983 and named his winery after Pegasus, the mythological winged horse that created a spring that fed divine grapevines. Then, Shrem held an architects' competition. Michael Graves, the winner, designed the winery's stunning structures. They house a world-class fine-art collection, including a huge painting behind the tasting bar, where informed pourers dole out specialties like Mitsuko's Vineyard chardonnay and pinot noir. There's also a remarkable sculpture garden and a vineyard-adjacent picnic facility (call to reserve a table). *1060 Dunaweal Lane, Calistoga. ☎ 707/942-4981. www.clospegase.com. Daily 10:30am–5pm. Tours (free) daily 11:30am & 2pm. Tastings: $20–35. Hwy. 101 N. Exit at Hwy. 37, then north on Calif. 121. Left on Hwy. 29 N., then right on Dunaweal Lane. Map p 132.*

Conn Creek NAPA This winery focuses on limited-production cabernets and bordeaux blends. Also try the sauvignon blanc—it's only available here. Taking its name from the stream running alongside the vineyard, Conn Creek has a Mediterranean-style building with a pleasant garden. It's just below Rutherford Hill, in the shadow of the renowned Auberge du Soleil resort and spa *8711 Silverado Trail, St. Helena. ☎ 707/963-9100. www.conncreek.com. Daily 11am–4pm (5pm on Sat). Tastings: $10–25, including reserve tasting (waived if you join the winery's mailing list or refunded with purchase). Hwy. 29 N., turn right on Oakville Cross Rd., then left on Silverado Trail. Map p132.*

Corison Winery NAPA *ORG* Tastings here are conducted the old-fashioned way: in the barrel cellar. Winemaker Cathy Corison specializes in handcrafted cabernets, and her labels bear ancient symbols. One depicts rain, the other, a sprouting seed. Tours include a visit to the winery's organically farmed Kronos Vineyard. ***987 St. Helena***

The sculptures and architecture at Clos Pegase make an impression.

Fall harvest in Napa and Sonoma is a good time to see the grapes as they're picked and sorted.

Hwy. (Hwy. 29), St. Helena. ☎ 707/963-0826. www.corison.com. Daily 10am–5pm. Free tours daily by appt. Tastings: $20 (deducted from purchase). Map p 132.

Cosentino Winery NAPA Founder and winemaker Mitch Cosentino offers more than 30 hand-harvested, small-lot wines, including some rich, sweet ones, like the romantically named Francesca d'Amore Vin Santo. Though this is fine, artistic wine, the staff is friendly. *7415 St. Helena Hwy. (Hwy. 29), Yountville. ☎ 707/921-2809. www.cosentinowinery.com. Daily 10am–5:30pm. Tours: $35 10am, noon, 2 & 4pm. Tastings: $10–$25 (no appt. needed); candlelight tasting by appt. $45. Map p 132.*

★ **Coturri Winery** *SONOMA BIO* This humble Glen Ellen winery feels like a time portal to pre-tourism 1970s Sonoma; here, the tasting room is Tony Coturri's backyard wine shed. His motto is "just grapes"—wine made without added yeast or preservatives—and he'll pour you some truly delicious, fruit-forward reds. Call ahead. *6725 Enterprise Rd., Glen Ellen. ☎ 707/525-9126. www.cotturiwinery.com. Daily 10:30am–5pm, except major holidays. Tastings: $10. Map p 134.*

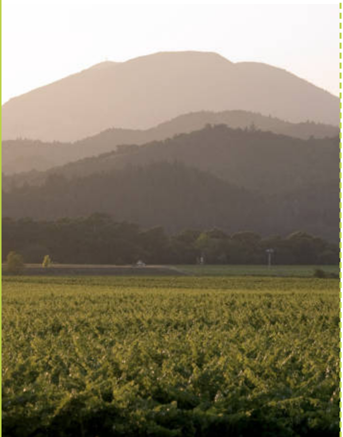
Cuvaison Winery NAPA This mission-style winery on the Silverado Trail was founded in 1969 by Silicon Valley techies. Since then, Cuvaison, a French word roughly meaning "fermentation of grape skins," has proved that its wines are award-worthy—praise has been especially heaped on the chardonnays, so try them if possible. From the tasting room site, there are great views of northern Napa. Picnic grounds are noteworthy for their 350-year-old oak trees. *4550 Silverado Trail, Calistoga. ☎ 707/942-2468. www.cuvaison.com. Daily 10am–5pm. Tours ($15–$20) by appt. Tastings: $10–$15 (includes souvenir glass). Also at: 1221 Duhig Rd., Napa. ☎ 707/942-2455. Daily 10am–5pm. Map p 132.*

★★★ **Darioush** NAPA "Impressive" is hardly an adequate word to describe this winery. Inspired by the ancient Persian city of Persepolis, Darioush Khaledi, a native of Iran's Shiraz region, created this epic complex in 1997. Rows of Greco columns and scalloped rooflines greet visitors outside. Inside, a blend of modern and ancient decor commingles with the effects of the strong bordeaux-style wines Darioush is known for. To splurge, try the "Private Tasting with Cheese Pairing Experience." In addition to a private tour of the visitor center and amphitheater, a personal host leads you to the classy six-seat Barrel Chai (say "shay") Private Tasting Room, where flights of Darioush's finest wines are expertly paired with local cheeses. *4240 Silverado Trail, Napa. ☎ 707/257-2345. www.darioush.com. Daily 10:30am–5pm, except major holidays. Current-release tasting available for walk-ins ($18–$35). Private tasting and cheese pairing tours ($60) daily 2pm by appt. Map p 132.*

De La Montanya Winery and Vineyards SONOMA This upbeat country-style winery has a tasting room surrounded by beauty: apple orchards, golden poppies, and Felta Creek. Most days, owner Dennis de la Montanya is behind the counter pouring. Best to try are the primitivo, pinot noir, Viognier, and zinfandel. Bring lunch—there's a vineyard patio where visitors eat alfresco. And if you want to stay overnight, know that the winery's cozy **Little Yellow Cottage** sleeps four. *999 Foreman Lane, Healdsburg.* ☎ *707/433-3711. www.dlmwine.com. Daily 11am–4:30pm (no appt. needed on weekends). No tours. Tastings: $5 (waived with purchase). Hwy. 101 N. to central Healdsburg exit. Left on Mill St., which turns into Westside Rd. Right onto Felta Rd. and go under the bridge. Map p 133.*

DeLoach Vineyards SONOMA *BIO* Guided tours at this Russian River winery include the biodynamic garden and wine samples straight from the barrel. In DLV's tasting room, remodeled by sought-after local architect Howard Backen, sample single-vineyard pinot noir, chardonnay, and zinfandel. Fresh bread is served with the wine to appease the moderately hungry. For a bigger meal, bring lunch and savor it in the outdoor courtyard with a refreshing bottle of, say, the winery's sauvignon blanc. Afterward, toss a game of horseshoes. *1791 Olivet Rd., Santa Rosa.* ☎ *707/526-9111. www.deloachvineyards.com. Daily 10am–5pm. Tours ($15) daily, by appt. Tastings: $10 (waived with wine purchase). Hwy. 101 N. Exit at River Rd., then left on Olivet Rd. Map p 133.*

Hills and mountains can affect a microclimate's levels of sunlight, fog, frost, and rain—which all affects the grapes.



★ **Domaine Carneros** NAPA Owned by French champagne magnate Claude Taittinger, this is the only sparkling-wine producer to exclusively use Carneros grapes. Domaine Carneros also offers a sophisticated welcome: Visitors ascend to the imposing Louis XV–style château via a grand staircase flanked by vineyards. In the tasting room and on the sunny veranda, sampler courses pair with cheese, and tastings come with free hors d'oeuvres. Try a light wine called Le Reve—it's a dream. Come at twilight, since this one stays open later than most other wineries. *1240 Duhig Rd., Napa.* ☎ *707/257-0101, ext.108. www.domainecarneros.com. Daily 10am–5:45pm. Tours ($25) daily 11am, 1 & 3pm. Tastings: $6.75–$20 by the glass; $16–$30 for flights. Hwy. 12 N. to Duhig Rd. Map p 132.*

★ **Domaine Chandon** NAPA French champagne house Moët et Chandon founded this prominent winery in 1973. Enjoy bubbly-and-food pairings—the Chandon Blanc de Noirs is highly recommended—while taking in fine art and even better views. Domaine Chandon also has an exceptional fine-dining restaurant. *1 California Dr. (at Hwy. 29), Yountville.* ☎ *707/944-2280. www.chandon.com. Daily 10am–5pm. Tours ($12–$32; $42 for private tour and tasting by reservation) daily. Tastings: $18. Map p 132.*

Duckhorn Vineyards NAPA At Duckhorn's high-end Estate House, taste smooth bordeaux varietals at the O-shaped bar. Prior to the 1pm estate tasting (make reservations), take the intimate winery tour and browse the waterfowl art collection and the handsome gardens. Owners Dan and Margaret Duckhorn are known for their hospitality. *1000 Lodi Lane, St. Helena. ☎ 888/354-8885. www.duckhorn.com. Daily 10am–4pm. Tours $40 by appt. Tastings: $20 (reservations recommended). Hwy. 29 N., then right on Lodi Lane. Map p 132.*

★★ **Ferrari-Carano Vineyards and Winery** SONOMA Ferrari-Carano is one of the region's most beautiful wineries. Villa Fiore, its Tuscan-style hospitality center, has a tasting bar overlooking the estate's impressive fountains. Limited releases are seasonally available, but the winery's Italian-influenced classics are more likely to be behind the bar. On the tour, experience behind-the-scenes winemaking, an underground cellar, and an eye-popping ramble through 5 acres (2 hectares) of verdant gardens laced with streams and waterfalls. *8761 Dry Creek Rd., Healdsburg. ☎ 707/433-6700. www.ferrari-carano.com. Daily 10am–5pm (closed major holidays). Tours (free) daily at 10am (reservations required). Tastings: $5 (refundable with $25 wine purchase). Hwy. 101 N. Exit and left on Dry Creek Rd. Map p 133.*

Domaine Chandon was founded by French champagne house Moët et Chandon in 1973.

Flora Springs Winery NAPA Forsake the crowds and get off the beaten path at this small, tucked-away estate in the Rutherford appellation. The Komes family specializes in bold reds, so try the Meritage blend and the cabernet—but don't miss the smooth sauvignon blanc, either. *677 S. St. Helena Hwy., St. Helena. ☎ 707/967-8032.*

The Ferrari-Carano estate.

www.florasprings.com. Daily 10am–5pm. Tastings: $20–$35 (no appt. necessary). On Hwy. 29 just south of St. Helena. Map p 132.

Foppiano Vineyards SONOMA *SUST* The self-guided tour is a highlight at Sonoma County's oldest continually owned family winery (it was founded in 1896). Visitors can walk through the petite sirah, chardonnay, cabernet, and merlot vines and learn about the recycled pumice pile (a sustainable way to feed vines). This low-key winery also has picnic tables, so bring lunch. ***12707 Old Redwood Hwy., Healdsburg. ☎ 707/433-7272. www.foppiano.com. Daily 10am–5pm. Tours: Self-guided tours (free) all day; guided tours ($15) by appt. Tastings: $5 (refundable with purchase). Hwy. 101 S., exit Old Redwood Hwy. Map p 133.***

★ **Franciscan Oakville Estate** NAPA This high-end property, with sunny patios and a visitor center offering a range of tastings, is known for its merlot and cabernet, though its best wine is the Magnificat, a deep, round blend named after Bach's music. Also interesting is the Cuvée Sauvage, a chardonnay made from fermented wild yeast. To try blending your own wine, book "Mastering Magnificat," one of the estate's educational seminars. ***1178 Galleron Rd., St. Helena. ☎ 707/967-3993. www.franciscan.com. Daily 10am–5pm (closed major holidays). No tours. Tastings: $15–$50 (no appt. but personalized tastings require reservations). At Hwy. 29. Map p 132.***

Frank Family Vineyards NAPA Originally known for its sparking wine, this winery now specializes in still ones: cabernet and chardonnay in particular. But it maintains a separate tasting space for its five versions of *méthode champenoise* bubbly—festive Champagne Rouge is worth trying. The winery's staff is friendly, and the entertaining tour includes all the lore that comes with being old enough for the National Register of Historic Places (it was built in 1884). Outside, a picnic area with vineyard views and centuries-old oak trees awaits. ***1091 Larkmead Lane, Calistoga. ☎ 800/574-9463. www.frankfamilyvineyards.com. Daily 10am–5pm. No tours. Tastings: $20–$30. Hwy. 29 N., then right on Larkmead Lane. Map p 132.***

Freemark Abbey Winery NAPA Established in 1886, Freemark Abbey was founded by California's first female winery owner, Josephine Tychson. In 1939, the estate got its name from three partners who bought it: **Charles Freeman, Mark Foster,** and **Abbey Ahern.** The tour goes to a century-old cellar, the crushing area, and an adjacent vineyard. The tasting room, once a candle factory, has a fireplace and live piano music on weekends. Winemaker Tim Bell's Cabernet Bosché is a must-try, as is the limited-production dessert Riesling. ***3022 St. Helena Hwy. (Hwy. 29), St. Helena. ☎ 800/963-9698. www.freemarkabbey.com. Daily 10am–5pm. Tours by appt. Tastings: $15–$50. Map p 132.***

Gallo of Sonoma SONOMA Gallo has a tasting room on Healdsburg Square with a country ambience. Try the pinot gris or pinot noir for free, or splurge and try the chardonnay or cabernet. Shell out a bit more money (provided you've made reservations), and you'll be whisked away to Barrelli Creek Vineyard in northwestern Alexander Valley for an educational vineyard-farming experience. Then, by a lake, you'll sample wines and local cheeses. ***320 Center St., Healdsburg. ☎ 707/433-2458. www.galloofsonoma.com. Daily 10am–6pm. Tours ($45, includes transportation to vineyard and tasting; reservations required) daily 11am. Tastings: $8–$15. Hwy. 101 N. Exit at***

Central Healdsburg, left on Plaza St., right on Center St. Map p 133.

Gary Farrell Vineyards & Winery SONOMA At this boutique producer of premium Russian River Valley pinot noir, sauvignon blanc, and chardonnay, there's a great view from the hilltop tasting room. The tour shows off the state-of-the-art winemaking facility and includes four wine tastes. *10701 Westside Rd., Healdsburg. ☎ 707/473-2900. www.garyfarrellwinery.com. Daily 11am–4pm. Tastings: $20–$25. Tour with tasting $25 Wed–Sun (reservations required). Hwy. 101 N. Exit & left at River Rd., then right on Wohler Rd., then left on Westside Rd. Map p 133.*

Geyser Peak Winery SONOMA Two levels of wine tasting occur here: The sunlit downstairs tasting offers free tastes of 10 popular wines (sauvignon blanc stands out). Upstairs, the classy Reserve Tasting Room offers table service for those who pay the nominal fee for reserve wines (don't miss the unusual sparkling shiraz) while viewing the barrel cellar below. Both rooms are stocked with knowledgeable, welcoming staff. Bring a picnic to enjoy on the flagstone patio; in summer, there's live music on Saturday afternoons. *22281 Chianti Rd., Geyserville. ☎ 707/857-2500. www.geyserpeakwinery.com. Daily 10am–5pm (closed major holidays). No tours. Tastings: $10–$15. Hwy. 101 N. Exit and left at Canyon Rd. Exit, then right on Chianti Rd. Map p 133.*

★ **Gloria Ferrer Champagne Caves** SONOMA The so-called "first lady of Sonoma," Gloria Ferrer is the culmination of seven generations of winemaking. The winery is known for its sparklers, though it also makes chardonnay, pinot noir, merlot, and syrah. Its large hacienda-style tasting room, where wine is served with spiced almonds, opens onto an outdoor terrace overlooking the vineyards. Take the free tour of the fermenting tanks, bottling line, and underground aging caves. *23555 Arnold Dr. (Hwy. 121), Sonoma. ☎ 707/996-7256. www.gloriaferrer.com. Daily 10am–5pm. Daily guided underground cave tours ($10, including tasting) 11am, 1 & 3pm. Tastings: $10. Hwy. 101 N. Exit at Hwy. 37, then north on Calif. 121. Map p 134.*

Grgich Hills Cellar NAPA *BIO, SUST* Ever since Croatian immigrant Miljenko "Mike" Grgich founded this winery in 1977, it has won acclaim. The new **Hospitality Center** begins serving wine earlier than most tasting rooms, so if you want an early start, come here. At the dark-wood bar, taste handcrafted cabernets and chardonnays made from sustainably farmed organic grapes. On Friday afternoons, the $5 tasting fee includes barrel tasting—a before-the-bottle preview of new releases. *1829 St. Helena Hwy. (Hwy. 29), Rutherford. ☎ 800/532-3057. www.grgich.com. Daily 9:30am–4:30pm. Tours ($35) daily 11am & 2pm (walk-ins okay); specialty tours (with tasting) by reservation ($50–$75). Tastings: $15*

The champagne caves at Gloria Ferrer.

(barrel tastings most Fri at 2 & 4pm). Map p 132.

★★ **Gundlach Bundschu Winery** SONOMA *SUST* Outdoorsy as opposed to stuffy, Gundlach Bundschu's cavernous tasting room is built right into the hillside. In it, winemaker Linda Trotta's creations—mostly reds—are poured for eager guests as they enjoy light snacks. If it's available, try the Kleinberger. An informative tour includes the caves and vineyard, and colorful tales about the winery's illustrious past; it's been around since 1858, after all, and has the distinction of being America's oldest family-owned winery. A variety of excellent picnic grounds overlook the valley. ***2000 Denmark St., Sonoma. ☎ 707/938-5277 (Sat–Sun 707/939-3015). www.gunbun.com. Daily 11am–5:30pm (4:30pm in winter; closed major holidays). Tours ($20) at 2:30pm weekdays by appt. (11am, 2:30pm weekends May–Oct). Tastings: $10. Hwy. 101 N. Exit at Hwy. 37, then north on Calif. 121. Right on Napa St., then right on 8th St. Left on Denmark St. Map p 134.***

Hagafen Cellars NAPA In Hebrew, "hagafen" means "the vine," and there are plenty of them at this small kosher winery—Napa's only one. Banish thoughts of Manischewitz, though. Hagafen's wines might be made according to Jewish law and blessed by an in-house rabbi, but these wines are as premium and flavorful as any other on the Silverado Trail—the award party on the tasting room wall attests to that. The most bedecked vintage offered is the white Riesling, so don't decline a taste. Hagafen wines have even been served at the White House. ***4160 Silverado Trail, Napa. ☎ 707/424-2336. www.hagafen.com. Daily 10am–5pm. Free tour Sun–Fri 11am by appt. Tastings: $5–$10. Map p 132.***

★ **Hall Winery** NAPA Hall Winery is actually two wineries: one in St. Helena and one in Rutherford. They're both owned by Kathryn Hall, the former U.S. Ambassador to Austria, and Craig Hall, her businessman/art-collector husband. The St. Helena location dates back to 1885—though Frank O. Gehry modernized the architecture. The courtyard works well for picnics, and tours include the original 1885 building. At the smaller, newer Rutherford location in the eastern hills, visitors see underground caves and modern art—and are treated like VIPs as they taste premium cabernet in the chandeliered tasting room. ***www.hallwines.com. ST. HELENA: 401 St. Helena Hwy. (Hwy. 29), St. Helena. ☎ 707/967-2620. Daily 10am–5:30pm. Tours by appt. only. Tastings: $15–$75 (walk-in and by appt.). RUTHERFORD: 56 Auberge Rd., Rutherford. ☎ 707/967-2626. Tours and tasting ($40) daily 10am, 1 & 3pm by appt. Silverado Trail north, left on Rutherford Hill Rd., left on Auberge Rd. Map p 132.***

Harvest Moon Estate & Winery SONOMA Harvest Moon is a little family-owned winery with welcoming servers in the small but nice tasting room. Though they focus on zinfandel, the gewürztraminer is more tasteworthy. ***2192 Olivet Rd., Santa Rosa. ☎ 707/573-8711. www.harvestmoonwinery.com. Daily 10am–5pm. Tours daily by appt. Tastings: $10 (waived with purchase). Hwy. 101 N. Exit at River Rd. and go west, then left on Olivet. Map p 133.***

★★★ **The Hess Collection Winery** NAPA *SUST* This winery might be remote, but the drive up Mt. Veeder is an attraction unto itself. Inside, design is contemporary to match Donald Hess's museum-quality art collection on the upper levels of the 1903 stone winery (formerly Christian Brothers). Downstairs is a dramatic tasting room with a maple bar, over which patrons taste internationally influenced wines, like the ones in the New World collection, produced with sustainable farming methods. In the wine store, French oak barrels line the walls. The concierge room provides tourist info and a phone for reservations. *4411 Redwood Rd., Napa.* ☎ *707/255-1144. www.hesscollection.com. Daily 10am–5:30pm (closed major holidays). Free self-guided art tours all day. Tastings: $10–$20. Specialty tasting tours and classes: $25–$75 (reservations required). Hwy. 101 N. to Hwy. 29 N. Exit Trancas St./Redwood Rd. Map p 132.*

Honig Vineyard & Winery NAPA *SUST* In addition to its normal winery tours, Honig hosts educational eco-walks through the vineyard to see the winery's sustainable agriculture methods: bat boxes, beehives, row management, and so on. Guides talk about trellising, pruning, growth cycles, and organic pest prevention. It's followed by wine tasting in the tasting room or on the patio. This midsize, family-run winery's award-winning sauvignon blanc and cabernet are handcrafted and blended. *850 Rutherford Rd., Rutherford.* ☎ *800/929-2217. www.honigwine.com. Daily 10am–4:30pm. No tours. Tastings: $10 by appt. (each fee waived with $25 purchase). Hwy. 29 N., turn right on Rutherford Rd. Map p 132.*

★ **Hop Kiln Winery** SONOMA The distinctive and old-fashioned Hop Kiln structure is a California Historical Landmark. Built by Italians in 1905 as a hop-drying barn, its three stone kilns point skyward, making this winery unmistakable. Its ranchlike Western feel permeates the grounds, whether you're savoring tastings in the rustic tasting room or picnicking at Old Fig Garden or Duck Pond. *6050 Westside Rd., Healdsburg.* ☎ *707/433-6491. www.hopkilnwinery.com. Daily 10am–5pm. No tours. Tastings: $7–$15. Hwy. 101 N. Exit at Central Healdsburg, then left on Mill St./Westside Rd. Map p 133.*

★ **Imagery Estate Winery & Art Gallery** SONOMA This is a winery for art lovers; each bottle label is a tiny version of an original painting, commissioned specifically for the wine it hugs. Each must somehow include Benziger Estate's Parthenon replica (Imagery is Benziger's sister winery and its winemaker is Joe Benziger). A curated collection of more than 175 artworks hangs in Imagery's gallery, a testament to the variety of small, uncommon lots (like malbec, petite sirah, and Viognier) produced here. There's a patio, a picnic lawn, and a bocce ball court. *14335 Hwy. 12, Glen Ellen.* ☎ *707/935-4515. www.imagerywinery.com. Daily 10am–4:30pm (Sat–Sun until 5:30pm). No tours. Tastings: $10–$15. Map p 134.*

★★★ **Inglenook** NAPA *ORG, SULF* Formerly Niebaum-Coppola and then the Rubicon Estate, this historic property—now known by its original 1879 moniker—is still owned by the Coppola family of filmmaking fame. Every 21-or-over visitor pays a $25 admission fee (Napa residents excluded), but that includes wine tasting within original 1882 sandstone walls, access to the gardens and ivy-covered château, and entry to the Centennial Museum, a historical tribute to wine and film. Founded in 1887 by Finnish seaman Gustave Niebaum, this remarkable winery offers five different tours, all of which highlight the property's understated glitziness. Try the winery's classics, like Blancaneaux, a Viognier-Roussanne-Marsanne blend, or Rubicon, a cabernet sauvignon–dominated claret. *1991 St. Helena Hwy., Rutherford.* ☎ *707/968-1100. www.inglenook.com. Daily*

10am–5pm. Tours free–$50 (call for schedule). Tastings included in $25 entrance fee. Hwy. 29 N. becomes St. Helena Hwy. Map p 132.

★ Jordan Vineyard & Winery

SONOMA For the ultimate in classic, refined opulence—with a serious and stately tour and tasting to match—visit Jordan's stunning estate. Inspired by southwestern France's grand châteaux, owner and oil magnate Tom Jordan's vine-covered winery was founded in 1972 and spans more than 1,500 acres (600 hectares). It's committed to cabernet sauvignon, merlot, and chardonnay. During the free tour, you'll see that every detail is attended to—from the winery construction to the way the beautiful stainless-steel tanks line the fermentation room, to the seating under the patio's great oak trees, to the manicured grounds. The tour ends with a tasting in the formal library. ***1474 Alexander Valley Rd., Healdsburg. ☎ 800/654-1213 or 707/431-5250. www.jordanwinery.com. Mon–Fri 8am–4:30pm, Sat–Sun 9am–3:30pm (reservations required for tours: closed Sun Nov–Apr). From Hwy. 101, take Dry Creek Rd. exit and turn left at 2nd traffic light onto Healdsburg Ave.; go 2 miles and turn right onto Alexander Valley Rd.; go 1½ miles, then turn right to enter the estate. Map p 133.***

Joseph Phelps Vineyards

NAPA *BIO* This state-of-the-art winery is a favorite stop for serious wine lovers. Tastings and seminars include blending, smelling, or a wine-themed history lesson. For a quicker experience, taste the fabulous flagship wine, Insignia, on the terrace. ***200 Taplin Rd. (off the Silverado Trail), St. Helena. ☎ 800/707-5789. www.jpvwines.com. Mon–Fri 9am–5pm; Sat–Sun 10am–4pm. Tastings: $30–$60 Mon–Fri 10am–3:30pm, Sat–Sun 10am–2:30pm; seminars by appt. only. Map p 132.***

Jordan Vineyards.

★ Joseph Swan Vineyards

SONOMA *ORG* In between luxurious, gated estates in the Russian River Valley, you'll find this humble family-owned winery offering little more than a barn with a few tasting tables—and some of the valley's best pinot noirs, zinfandels, and Rhône-style chardonnays. Winemaker Rod Berglund is usually on hand and happy to take you out back to explain their farming practices. ***2916 Laguna Rd., Forestville. ☎ 707/ 573-3747. www.swanwinery.com. Daily 11am–4:30pm. Free tastings. Map p 133.***

Kaz Vineyard & Winery

SONOMA The philosophy at quirky Kaz is "no harm in experimenting"—and that venturesome spirit pays off in the form of some innovative wines: Sangiofranc, for example, is a blend of sangiovese and cabernet franc. One of Sonoma's smallest wineries, Kaz is exceedingly family-friendly. Its pumpkin patch, coloring books, koi pond, barnlike building, and croquet lawn ensure that kids will have fun while parents relax. The Little House is the winery's cozy on-site lodging (a stay guarantees free wine). ***233 Adobe Canyon Rd., Kenwood. ☎ 877/833-2536 or 707/ 833-2536. www.kazwinery.com. Daily Fri–Mon 11am–5pm. Tastings: $5. From Sonoma Hwy. N, turn right on Adobe Canyon Rd. Map p 134.***

★ Kendall-Jackson Wine Center SONOMA There are two Kendall-Jackson hot spots: the Wine

Center in Santa Rosa and a tasting room on Healdsburg Square. The Wine Center's picture-perfect manor is surrounded by gardens, including a culinary and sensory garden and a demonstration vineyard. Picnic grounds are in a 100-year-old walnut grove, but if you're hungry, consider the food-and-wine reserve tasting. At the recently remodeled Healdsburg tasting room, visitors can try any Kendall-Jackson offering, including their best: the Stature and Estate wines. ***WINE CENTER:** 5007 Fulton Rd., Fulton. ☎ 800/769-3649. www.kj.com (tasting coupons). Daily 10am–5pm. Garden tours (free) daily 11am, 1 & 3pm. Tastings: $5–$15. Hwy. 101 N. West on River Rd., right on Fulton Rd. **TASTING ROOM:** 337 Healdsburg Ave., Healdsburg. ☎ 707/433-7102. Daily 10:30am–5:30pm. Tastings: $5–$15. Hwy. 101 N. Exit Central Healdsburg. Map p 133.*

★ Kenwood Vineyards

SONOMA *SULF, SUST* Though known for its reds, tastings at Kenwood include an array of varietals; the reserve chardonnays are often worth trying. The tasting room is in one of the winery's original 1906 structures—a farmhouse, actually. The interior, of course, has been redone; it's now cozy and welcoming. ***9592 Sonoma Hwy. (Hwy. 12), Kenwood. ☎ 707/833-5891. www.kenwoodvineyards.com. Daily 10am–4:30pm. Tours by appt. only. Tastings: start at $5 (reservations required; tasting fee refunded with purchase of 3 bottles). Hwy. 101 N. Exit at Hwy. 37, then north on Calif. 121. Map p 134.***

A tasting and a tour at Francis Ford Coppola's Inglenook starts at $25.

Kendall-Jackson Wine Center is one of many wineries switching to synthetic corks.

★ Kokomo Winery SONOMA

There's nothing Caribbean about these wines—they're named after Kokomo, Indiana, hometown of owner Erik Miller. Sample on-site grown zinfandels, cabernets, and malbecs, as well as Russian River pinot noirs and chardonnays at his Dry Creek Road tasting room, which shares a parking lot with five other wineries—that makes this address at Timber Crest Farms a good bet on festival weekends, but you'll enjoy a tasting in their attractive barrel room with an affable staff anytime. ***4791 Dry Creek Rd. ☎ 707/433-0200. www.kokomowinery.com. Mon–Sun 11am–4:30pm. $5 for 4 tastings (refunded with purchase). Map p 133.***

★★ Korbel Champagne Cellars

SONOMA To see the very pretty grounds of America's oldest *méthode champenoise* champagne producer, take the tour. It starts at an old railroad station and includes the cellars and History Museum. There's also a rose garden tour (1–3pm, mid-Apr to mid-Oct), during which you'll see more than 1,000 flower varieties. The tasting room is humongous, and the sandwiches from the fancy deli are amazing. Of the wines to taste, the brut is the most popular, but the pinot grigio, a zesty cuvée, is more exclusive. Korbel is on the way to Armstrong Redwoods State Reserve, so the winery is surrounded by ancient redwoods. *13250 River Rd., Guerneville.* ☎ *707/824-7000. www.korbel.com. Daily 10am–4:30pm. Tours 11am–3pm (by reservation only). Tastings: free. Hwy. 101 N. Exit & left on River Rd. Map p 133.*

★ **Kunde Estate Winery & Vineyards** SONOMA *SUST* Owned and run by fourth-generation Kundes, this winery produces estate-grown wines; a surefire bottle to take home is a reserve cabernet sauvignon. The tasting room, in a cow-barn replica, overlooks a reflecting pool with a fountain, and nicely displays the winery's century-long history on the wall behind the bar. Available to buy are Kunde's popular cabernet chocolate cherries, which are a great dessert after picnicking on the oak-surrounded grounds. *9825 Sonoma Hwy. (Hwy. 12), Kenwood.* ☎ *707/833-5501. www.kunde.com. Daily 10:30am–4:30pm. Tours $20–$75 (barrel tasting, picnic, horseback, hiking and vineyard specialty tours) by appt. Tastings: $20–$40 (refunded with purchase). Map p 134.*

Kokomo Winery is one of the many wineries you can sample during Sonoma's Barrel Tasting weekends in March. See www.wineroad.com.

KOKOMO
WINERY
Peace Love Pinot

Ladera Vineyards NAPA This off-the-beaten-path winery, built in 1898 on Howell Mountain, was restored as a gravity-flow facility. Owner Anne Stotesbery treats visitors like personal guests and leads tours that begin in the gardens and end with tastes in the fermentation room. Ask to try the low-yield, high-quality malbec, which is tapered by a small quantity of cabernet sauvignon. *150 White Cottage Rd. S, Angwin.* ☎ *707/965-2445. www.laderavineyards.com. Tours: $50 daily 11am & 2pm. Tastings: $15 (reservations required) daily 10am–3:30pm. Call for directions. Map p 132.*

★ **Ledson Winery & Vineyards** SONOMA Known to locals as "The Castle," Ledson is memorable for its fairy-tale-like architecture, complete with regal gates and a hyper-pruned fountain courtyard. In the Gothic Normandy–style behemoth of a structure, taste handcrafted wines made from a wide range of small varietal lots at one of multiple bars. Its library and reserve wines are available only at the winery, so tote home the much-praised 1997 Estate Merlot Reserve (if you can afford it, that is: A 1.5-liter bottle sets you back $425). Hungry? There's picnic space and a gourmet market. *7335 Sonoma Hwy. (Hwy. 12), Kenwood.* ☎ *707/537-3810. www.ledson.com. Daily 10am–5pm. Tours (free) given upon request. Tastings: $15–$35. Hwy. 101 N. Exit at Hwy. 37, then north on Calif. 121. Map p 134.*

★ **Louis M. Martini Winery** NAPA The winery's circa-1933 name notwithstanding, the drink it's best known for is cabernet sauvignon. Its whites, too, have made a name for themselves and you're likely to find gewürztraminer, pinot gris, and chardonnay among the options. Operated by third-generation Martinis (though it's now owned by Gallo), this tasting room was recently redesigned. Be sure to cap your tasting flight with the winery's 55-year-old tawny port. ***254 St. Helena Hwy. (Hwy. 29), St. Helena. ☎ 800/321-9463 or 707/968-3362. www.louismartini.com. Daily 10am–6pm (closed major holidays). Tours daily at 11am & 2pm, $25; book in advance. Tastings: $15–$30 (complimentary tasting for each purchase). Map p 132.***

★ Monticello Vineyards/Corley Family Napa Valley NAPA For a just-off-the-beaten-path experience, choose Monticello. In its grand colonial-style Jefferson House (inspired by oenophile Thomas Jefferson), the Corley family hosts comparative seminars and private tastings featuring wines that have been served in the White House. This limited-production winery is known for its cabernet, chardonnay, pinot noir, and merlot. The sheltered picnic grove is a perfect lunch spot. ***4242 Big Ranch Rd., Napa. ☎ 707/253-2802. www.monticellovineyards.com. Daily 10am–4:30pm. Tastings: from $15. Hwy. 29 to Oak Knoll Ave., then south on Big Ranch Rd. Map p 132.***

★★ Mumm Napa NAPA Known for its sparkling wines, Mumm's glass-enclosed tasting room and its terrace are the places to sample Brut Prestige, Blanc de Noirs, or Santana DVX (developed with Carlos Santana) while soaking in expansive valley views. Mumm's photography gallery includes many dramatic Ansel Adams works and rotating exhibits in long, Spanish-style hallways. Tours visit the demonstration vineyard and winery, where guides demystify *méthode champenoise.* ***8445 Silverado Trail, Rutherford. ☎ 707/967-7700. www.mummnapa.com. Daily 10am–4:45pm. Tours 10 (free) & 11am, 1 & 3pm. Tastings: $7–$65. Hwy. 101 N. Exit at Hwy. 37, then north on Calif. 121. Map p 132.***

Ledson Winery is the perfect place to pull up in your stretch limo.

★★ Opus One NAPA *BIO* Opus One is synonymous with luxury—not surprising, given that two huge names founded it: Robert Mondavi (d. 2008) and Baron Philip de Rothschild (d. 1988). Today, Baroness Philippine de Rothschild (Philip's daughter) helps run the place—and what a place. Striking architecture blends Californian and European influences, the salon is plush and opulent, and views from the rooftop deck are unsurpassed. Though the tasting fee is steep, it comes into context when you learn that in 1981, a single case sold for $24,000. Always accessible to the average visitor is the current vintage, usually a preponderance of ripe cabernet sauvignon blended with smaller quantities of merlot, malbec, petit verdot, and cabernet franc. ***7900 St. Helena Hwy., Oakville. ☎ 707/944-9442. www.opusonewinery.com. Daily 10am–4pm (closed major holidays). Tours ($50–$75, reservations required) daily 10:30am, 1:30 & 2:30pm. Tastings: $35. Hwy. 29 N. becomes Main St., then St. Helena Hwy. Map p 132.***

Paradise Ridge Winery
SONOMA This family-owned boutique winery on a hill devotes itself to art almost as ardently as it does to wine (small lots of cabernet, sauvignon blanc, and chardonnay). Among the oaks is a sculpture grove with abstract metal works. The champagne cellar houses a tribute to Kanaye Nagasawa, who produced the majority of Sonoma County wine in the late 1800s. Come for the spectacular view—you can see Point Reyes from here. ***www.prwinery.com. SANTA ROSA: 4545 Thomas Lake Harris Dr., Santa Rosa. ☎ 707/528-9463. Daily 11am–5pm. Hwy. 101 N. Exit at Bicentennial Way, then merge onto Fountaingrove Pkwy. Turn left on Thomas Lake Harris Dr. KENWOOD: 8860 Sonoma Hwy., Kenwood. ☎ 707/282-9020. Daily 11am–6pm. Self-guided tours only. Tastings: $10 (refunded with purchase). Map p 133.***

★ **Paraduxx Winery** NAPA *SUST*
This relative new winery (opened Sept 2005) has a sunny, chic sit-down tasting room where personable wine educators pour red wine (a zinfandel-cabernet blend) into stemless glasses. Also provided: local artisan foods to pair with the wine. ***7257 Silverado Trail, Napa. ☎ 707/945-0890. www.paraduxx.com. Daily 10am–4pm. No tours. Tastings: $25–$50 by appt. Map p 132.***

★★★ **Paul Hobbs Winery**
SONOMA *SUST* The minimally labeled sign on the road gives you a clue you're in for a refined and exclusive tasting experience at this winery, which has grown a cult following for its cabernets and pinot noirs. Tours are appointment-only and are intimate by design; you'll sit in the living room of a modern home (formerly Paul's), where a guide will talk you through a wine tasting then show you the property. It's one of the most elegant tours we've had in wine country. Tours ($30) last 2 hours, available at 10am or 2pm. Book a five-course lunch for $150/person. Your best deal is the $45 "Small Bites Tour," which is more filling than it suggests. ***3355 Gravenstein Highway N., Sebastopol. ☎ 707-824-9879. www.paulhobbswinery.com. Appt. only. Tastings: $30; with food $45–$150. Map p 133.***

Book ahead for a private sit-down tasting and tour at the elegant Paul Hobbs Winery.

Peju Province Winery NAPA
ORG Beautiful gardens and unique architecture are big draws here; sculptures and fountains are featured throughout the lush grounds, while a 50-foot (15m) tower houses the tasting room. Ask the musically inclined tasting-room staff to pour samples of Peju's artisan red wines, like the summery Carignane, or opt for the food-and-wine pairing, offered only on weekdays. Though this winery stays open later than most, it gets crowded in the late afternoon, especially on weekends. ***8466 St. Helena Hwy. (Hwy. 29), Rutherford. ☎ 800/446-7358. www.peju.com. Daily 10am–6pm (closed major holidays). Tours $50. Tastings: $15 (refunded with $30 wine purchase); specialty tastings $20–$75 by appt. Map p 132.***

★ **PlumpJack Winery** NAPA
This hip winery, founded in a partnership between oil heir Gordon

Getty and politician Gavin Newsom, has always been progressive in its approach to winemaking: It started the trend of using screw caps instead of corks on cabernet. The full-bodied, berry-tinged cabernet sauvignons are proof that the system works. The best part? PlumpJack offers reasonably priced bottles to take home. ***620 Oakville Cross Rd., Oakville.* ☎ *707/945-1220. www.plumpjackwinery.com. Daily 10am–4pm. No tours. Tastings: $15. Hwy. 101 N. Exit at Hwy. 37, then north on Calif. 121. Right on Oakville Cross Rd. Map p 132.***

Preston Vineyards SONOMA *ORG SUST* This vineyard and organic farm—at the end of a winding driveway off of West Dry Creek Road—offers serene, bucolic picnic areas and delicious wines, especially the Madam Preston Viognier blend. Look for their $34 Guadagni jug of red (the equivalent of 4 bottles, a great deal). The farm makes its own honey, jams, olive oils, and more. ***9206 West Dry Creek Rd., Healdsburg.* ☎ *707/433-3372. www.prestonvineyards.com. Daily 10am–5pm (closed major holidays). Tastings: $10, waived with purchase. Map p 133.***

Provenance Vineyards NAPA Provenance's deep-red building matches the wines it's known for (though winemaker Tom Rinaldi does make one white, a heck of a sauvignon blanc). The well-lit, cleanly designed tasting room opened in late 2003. Be sure to look down while sipping these handcrafted wines—the floor is made entirely of recycled oak barrels. Tours include the cellar and vineyard. ***1695 St. Helena Hwy. (Hwy. 29), Rutherford.* ☎ *707/968-3633. www.provenancevineyards.com. Daily 10am–5pm (closed major holidays). Tastings: $20. Map p 132.***

★ Ravenswood Winery SONOMA This family-owned winery's "no wimpy wines" slogan holds true—these bold zins pack a punch. The tasting room is less than a mile from Sonoma Plaza, and tours include up-close views of the vines and barrel tasting in the cellar. ***18701 Gehricke Rd., Sonoma.* ☎ *707/933-2332. www.ravenswoodwinery.com. Daily 10am–4:30pm. Tours ($15) daily at 10:30am (reservations recommended). Tastings: $10–$15 (including a keepsake glass). Hwy. 101 N. Exit at Hwy. 37, then north on Calif. 121. Map p 134.***

Raymond Vineyards NAPA *SUST* The Raymonds are fifth-generation winemakers with lineage tracing them to Jacob Beringer. They founded this estate in 1971 between Rutherford and St. Helena. Taste current releases and library vintages of the winery's cabernet, zinfandel, merlot, and chardonnay. ***849 Zinfandel Lane, St. Helena.* ☎ *707/963-6929. www.raymondvineyards.com. Daily 10am–4pm. Self-guided tours. Tastings: $20–$25 (require 30-min. notice); "winemaker for a day" $100 by appt. Just off Hwy. 29. Map p 132.***

Robert Craig Wine Cellars NAPA Though Robert Craig's winery isn't open to the public, fans of

The distinctive red at Provenance Vineyards.

his upscale mountain cabernet can visit the tasting room in downtown Napa. Call ahead to schedule a personalized sit-down tasting and get ready for wines served in restaurants of The French Laundry caliber. His cabernet sauvignon tends to have an enveloping mahogany essence. Weekend open houses with barrel tastings happen whenever new vintages are released. *880 Vallejo St., Napa.* ☎ *707/252-2250. TASTING ROOM: 625 Imperial Way. www.robertcraigwine.com. Mon–Sat 10am–4pm & Sun 11am–4pm by appt. No tours. Tastings: $20 (credited toward wine purchase). Hwy. 29 N. Right on Lincoln, then right on Soscol, then right on Vallejo St. Map p 132.*

★★ Robert Mondavi Winery NAPA Robert Mondavi is Napa's most powerful winery in terms of sheer size and strength, perhaps because the man himself (Mondavi, that is) pioneered the concept of public tastings; everyone else followed. Still devoted to wine education, this mission-style complex has three tasting rooms and an array of tours, from one focusing on flavor profiling to another ending with a gourmet three-course meal. Try the fumé blanc (Mondavi coined the term) and the reserve cabernet, then enjoy the rotating art exhibit or, if it's summer, a music concert (check website for schedule). *7801 St. Helena Hwy. (Hwy. 29), Oakville.* ☎ *707/226-1395. www.robertmondavi.com/rmw. Daily 10am–5pm (closed major holidays). Call for tour schedule ($15). Tastings: $15–$55 ($30 wine and music). Map p 132.*

Robert Mondavi Winery's fountain.

Cover crops such as mustard plants improve a vineyard's soil.

St. Clement Vineyards SONOMA This winery, once owned by Charles Krug and now part of the Beringer Wine Estates, uses fruit from independent growers to make its reds and whites. The cabernets are the winery's stars. Imbibe at the hospitality center in the New England–style Rosenbaum House, built in 1878. Relax afterward on the veranda or at picnic tables. *2867 St. Helena Hwy. (Hwy. 29), St. Helena.* ☎ *866/877-5939. www.stclement.com. Daily 11am–5pm (closed major holidays). Tastings: $10–$30 (tastings include a paired food bite; boxed lunch additional $30; chocolate or cheese pairing additional $10).*

★ St. Francis Winery & Vineyards SONOMA *SUST* At the foot of Hood Mountain, this mission-style winery offers views as enjoyable as its wine. "The House of Big Reds," as it's known, offers three tasting experiences, the most expensive of which pairs reserve zins, merlots, and cabernets with chef Todd Muir's gourmet hors d'oeuvres. *100 Pythian Rd., Santa Rosa.* ☎ *800/543-7713, ext. 242. www.stfranciswinery.com. Daily 10am–5pm* *(closed major holidays). No tours. Tastings: $10, wine and food tastings $25–$38. Hwy. 12 W., then left on Pythian Rd. Map p 134.*

St. Supéry Winery NAPA Known for its Meritage whites and reds, the emphasis at St. Supéry, besides wine production, is educating visitors. Don't be put off by the Atkinson House's somewhat nondescript exterior; inside are a beautiful art gallery and informative displays (one sprays out smells of different grape varieties). Near the house are a demonstration vineyard and family-friendly picnic grounds. ***8440 St. Helena Hwy. (Hwy. 29), Rutherford. ☎ 800/942-0809. www.stsupery.com. Daily 10am–5pm (closed major holidays). Guided winemaker's tour Mon–Thurs $50; self-guided tours free. Tastings: $35. Reservations recommended. Map p 132.***

★★ Schramsberg Vineyards NAPA California Historical Landmark No. 561 earned the distinction for its founding date (1862) plus its rich history: Robert Louis Stevenson was so inspired by his 1880 visit that he included Schramsberg in *Silverado Squatters.* Today, the sparkling wines are so venerable that U.S. presidents present them to foreign dignitaries. Tours feature hand-carved champagne caves housing 2 million bottles and culminate at a round table in the wood-paneled tasting room, where seated visitors may try Brut Rosé, J. Schram, or other vintages. ***1400 Schramsberg Rd., Calistoga. ☎ 707/942-4558. www.schramsberg.com. Daily 10am–4pm. Guided tour and tasting ($45) daily by appt. End of Schramsberg Rd. on Hwy. 29. Map p 132.***

★ Schug Carneros Estate Winery SONOMA Founded in 1980, this family-owned winery's specialties are French-style pinot noir and chardonnay. Try them in the small tasting room, which is in a German-style timber-frame building. Afterward, picnic at tables near an herb garden, visit the duck pond, or merely take in the view; if it's a clear day, try to spot Mt. Diablo in the distance. ***602 Bonneau Rd., Sonoma. ☎ 800/966-9365. www.schugwinery.com. Daily 10am–5pm. Tours available by appt. Tastings: $5–$10. Hwy. 101 N. Exit at Hwy. 37, then north on Calif. 121. Left on Bonneau Rd. Map p 134.***

A tasting room at Schramsberg.

★★ Sebastiani Vineyards & Winery SONOMA Sonoma's oldest family-owned winery was founded in 1904 by Samuele Sebastiani, though the vineyards have been here since 1825. At the large tasting room, try the winery's specialties: cabernet, merlot, and barbera. The grounds display examples of antique winemaking equipment, including the winery's original press. **Cuneo Cottage** is the estate's homey vacation rental. ***Tip:*** Sebastiani is 4 blocks from Sonoma Plaza, so park at the winery and walk into town, since parking can be difficult during high season. ***389 4th St. E., Sonoma. ☎ 707/933-3230. www.sebastiani.com. Daily 11am–5pm.***

Sterling Vineyards' striking white buildings.

Free tours at 11am, 1 & 3pm. Tastings: $10–$20; tour, tasting, and lunch or wine-and-cheese tasting $30. From Broadway/Calif. 12 N., turn right on E. Napa St., then left on 4th St. E. Map p 134.

Sebastopol Vineyards/Dutton Estate SONOMA Taste Sebastopol Vineyards' Russian River Valley chardonnay, pinot noir, and syrah in the Spanish-style hospitality center surrounded by palm trees. Picnic grounds available. *8757 Green Valley Rd. (at Hwy. 116), Sebastopol. ☎ 707/829-9463. www.sebastopolvineyards.com. Daily 10am–5pm. No tours. Tastings: $10–$15. Map p 133.*

★ **Shafer Vineyards** NAPA *SUST* Though you have to make reservations 4 to 6 weeks in advance for this 90-minute visit, it's worth it to see Shafer's cellar, cave, barrel room, and sustainably farmed vineyards and to try six Shafer wines, including the stunning Hillside Select. The bright, intimate tasting room has a fireplace and serene vineyard views. *6154 Silverado Trail, Napa. ☎ 707/944-2877. www.shafervineyards.com. Retail sales Mon–Fri 9am–noon, 1–4pm. Tours and tasting ($45) Mon–Fri 10am & 2pm by reservation only. Map p 132.*

★ **Simi Winery** SONOMA After encountering a UC Davis enology professor at a wine festival, Steve Reeder transferred colleges to learn how to make wine. His creations (chardonnay, cabernet, and sauvignon blanc) are the focal point of Simi's redwood-paneled tasting room. Tours include stone cellars and discussions on how Italian brothers Giuseppe and Pietro founded Simi in 1876—they'd come for the Gold Rush but discovered another California treasure: grapes. For picnics, there's a grove with 70-year-old redwoods. *16275 Healdsburg Ave., Healdsburg. ☎ 800/746-4880. www.simiwinery.com. Daily 10am–5pm. Tours ($10 adults; $5 children, includes tasting) daily 11am & 2pm. Tastings: $15 (refunded with purchase). Hwy. 101 N. Exit and right at Dry Creek Rd., then left on Healdsburg Ave. Map p 133.*

★★ **Sterling Vineyards** SONOMA The most distinctive part of this winery is the aerial gondola that takes you there, providing far-reaching views of Napa Valley. Just this alone is worth the $20 to get in ($15 if it's a winter weekday, $10 if you're younger than 21). Admission also includes a self-guided tour that includes wine-related art and artifacts (videos and placards provide info) and sit-down wine sampling in the impressive tasting facility. A reserve tour and tasting is $45 and includes samples of wines like the SVR (a bordeaux blend) and reserve merlot, cabernet sauvignon, and chardonnay. *1111 Dunaweal Lane, Calistoga. ☎ 707/942-3300. www.sterlingvineyards.com. Mon–Fri 10:30am–4:30pm; Sat–Sun 10am-5pm (closed major holidays). Tour and tasting: $25 (includes gondola ride, self-guided tour, and tasting). Between Hwy. 29 & Silverado Trail.*

★ **Stryker Sonoma** SONOMA Friendly, young Stryker is an extension of its founders, Pat Stryker and Craig and Karen McDonald. You'll feel its fresh, modern vibe when you arrive at its slatted-wood walkway, sit at its sleek curved bar, look up at the lofted wood ceiling, order a taste of zin, and gaze out at the vines through floor-to-ceiling windows. If you tire from the view (impossible, though), cross the mahogany-stained cement floor and peer through the windows overlooking the barrel room below. ***Note:*** Stryker only sells out of its tasting room, online, and, per winemaker Tim Hardin, "to a few local restaurants we like." *5110 Hwy. 128, Geyserville. ☎ 707/433-1944. www.strykersonoma.com. Daily 10:30am–5pm. Self-guided tours (free) available without reservations. Tastings: $10. Map p 133.*

V. Sattui features an on-site deli and picnic tables.

★ **Sutter Home Winery** NAPA *ORG, SUST* Built in 1874 and founded as a winery in 1890, Sutter Home was bought in 1947 by the Trinchero family, who claim to have invented white zinfandel in 1973. Today, similar blush-colored wines characterize the winery's specialties. The tasting room is in the original 1874 building. The organic White Zinfandel garden, with its handsome gazebo, nurtures 125 rose species, and century-old palm trees flank the manor. This family winery takes environmental responsibility quite seriously, from its organic vineyard and water-conservation practices to its recyclable, low-emission packaging and winery-wide recycling. *277 St. Helena Hwy. (Hwy. 29), St. Helena. ☎ 707/963-3104, ext. 4208. www.sutterhome.com. Daily 10am–5pm. Free self-guided garden tours all day. Tastings: free. Map p 132.*

Tin Barn Vineyards SONOMA Adding to the trend toward wineries self-contained in warehouses is Tin Barn, which is family-owned and eager to show off its facility. Book the hands-on tour with winemaker Michael Lancaster, who guides visitors above massive fermenting tanks and lets them sample wines from the barrel. The no-frills, tin-topped tasting room has a metal-and-wood tasting bar, over which small-lot zinfandel, cabernet, syrah, and sauvignon blanc are paired with local cheeses. *21692 8th St., No. 340, Sonoma. ☎ 707/938-5430. www.tinbarnvineyards.com. Fri–Mon noon–5pm. Tastings: $6 (waived with purchase). Hwy. 101 N. Exit at Hwy. 37, then north on Calif. 121 to 8th St. E. Map p 134.*

★ **Trefethen Vineyards** NAPA Trefethen was designed and built in

1886 by Scottish seaman Hamden McIntyre, who also designed Far Niente, Rubicon Estate, and the Culinary Institute of America. An old-fashioned wooden gravity-flow winery helped the winery qualify for the National Register of Historic Places. In the tasting room, try Riesling, Viognier, and chardonnay. ***1160 Oak Knoll Ave., Napa. ☎ 866/895-7696. www.trefethen.com. Daily 10am–4:30pm. Tours $25 by appt. Tastings: $15–$25. Hwy. 37 W., then right on Hwy. 29, then right on Oak Knoll Ave. Map p 132.***

★★ **V. Sattui Winery** NAPA In 1885, Vittorio Sattui established his winery in San Francisco. When Prohibition was enacted, he said, "I'll do nothing against the law" and shut the operation down. In 1976, his descendents reopened the winery in St. Helena. In the large, festive tasting room, a fourth-generation Sattui is likely to pour your wine. V. Sattui's wines aren't sold in shops or restaurants, so stock up here on vintages like the interestingly dry rosés. If you buy food at the gourmet deli (lots of free nibbles to try), you can use the picnic grounds, where giant oaks provide shade and beauty. ***1111 White Lane, St. Helena. ☎ 707/963-7774. www.vsattui.com. Daily 9am–6pm (5pm Nov–Feb). Free self-guided tours all day. Tastings: $10–$15. Just off Hwy. 29. Map p 132.***

Viader Vineyards and Winery NAPA *BIO* On 1,300-foot-high (390m) Howell Mountain, Delia Viader's winery affords stunning valley views from its terrace. The tasting fee includes all five of her high-end wines, including hard-to-find "V," a blend of Petit Verdot and cabernet. ***1120 Deer Park Rd., Deer Park. ☎ 707/963-3816. www.viader.com. Daily 10am–4:30pm (limited hours Sun in winter). Tastings: $45–$60 (by appt.). From the Silverado Trail, turn east on Deer Park Rd. Map p 132.***

★★ **Viansa Winery** SONOMA Founded in 1989 by Vicki and Sam Sebastiani (the winery's moniker is an amalgam of their first names), this Tuscan-style hilltop estate houses a branch of the Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau. It also has an Italian deli that sells excellent focaccia sandwiches and, sometimes, tours into the underground cellars. An old-world marketplace offers comprehensive wine tastings and plenty of food samples made fresh in the *cucina.* Plus, you can buy Italy-inspired varieties like Viansa's berry-flavored blends of multiple types of red grapes. ***25200 Arnold Dr. (Hwy. 121), Sonoma. ☎ 800/995-4740. www.viansa.com. Daily 10am–5pm. Tastings: $5–$10 (refunded with purchase). Map p 134.***

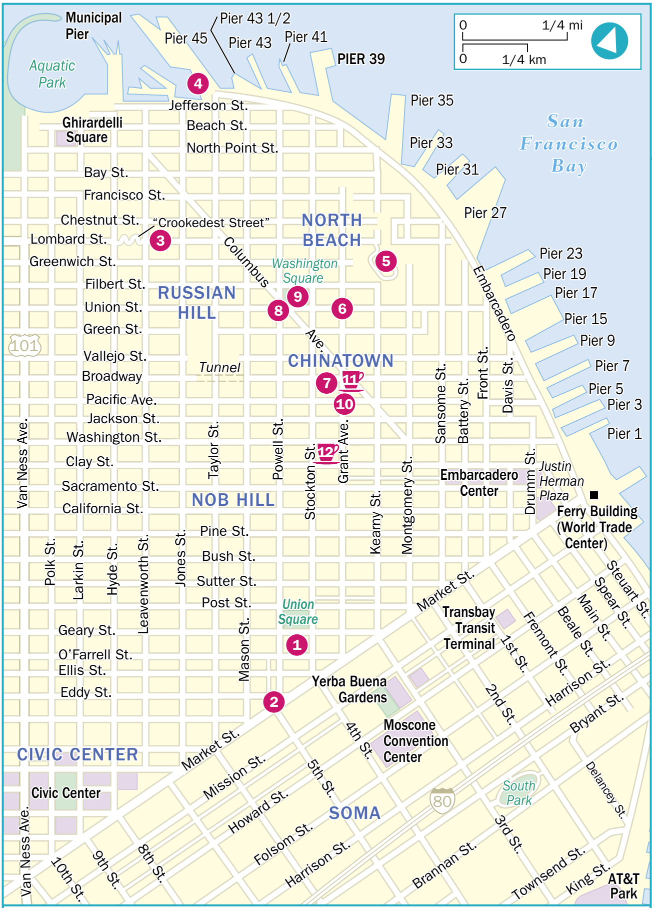
ZD Wines NAPA *ORG* Try Abacus, the winery's best cabernet, at the wood-paneled tasting bar. Weekends bring specialized tasting experiences: On Saturdays, ZD presents a wine-and-cheese seminar, while Sundays are reserved for sensory-component tastings. Be sure to reserve both of these in advance. ***8383 Silverado Trail, Napa. ☎ 800/487-7757. www.zdwines.com. Daily 10am–4:30pm. Tastings: $10–$20. Tasting & tours starting at $25 by appt. Map p 132.*** ●

Viansa Winery offers Tuscan style, beauty, and food.

8

San Francisco

The Best of San Francisco **in One Day**


Municipal Pier
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Jefferson St.
Beach St.
North Point St.
Ghirardelli Square
Pier 35
Pier 33
Pier 31
San Francisco Bay
Bay St.
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Chestnut St.
"Crookedest Street"
Lombard St.
3
Greenwich St.
NORTH BEACH
Pier 27
Washington Square
5
Columbus
Filbert St.
Union St.
Green St.
RUSSIAN HILL
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8
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Pier 23
Pier 19
Pier 17
Pier 15
Pier 9
Pier 7
Pier 5
Pier 3
Pier 1
Embarcadero
101
Vallejo St.
Broadway
Tunnel
Ave.
CHINATOWN
7
11
10
Pacific Ave.
Jackson St.
Washington St.
Clay St.
Sacramento St.
California St.
Van Ness Ave.
Taylor St.
Powell St.
Stockton St.
12
Grant Ave.
Kearny St.
Montgomery St.
Sansome St.
Battery St.
Front St.
Davis St.
Drumm St.
Embarcadero Center
Justin Herman Plaza
Ferry Building (World Trade Center)
NOB HILL
Pine St.
Bush St.
Sutter St.
Post St.
Polk St.
Larkin St.
Hyde St.
Leavenworth St.
Jones St.
Mason St.
Union Square
1
Geary St.
O'Farrell St.
Ellis St.
Eddy St.
2
Market St.
Transbay Transit Terminal
1st St.
Fremont St.
Beale St.
Main St.
Spear St.
Steuart St.
Harrison St.
Bryant St.
Yerba Buena Gardens
Moscone Convention Center
4th St.
2nd St.
CIVIC CENTER
Civic Center
Market St.
Mission St.
5th St.
Howard St.
SOMA
Folsom St.
Harrison St.
80
South Park
3rd St.
Delancey St.
Brannan St.
Townsend St.
King St.
AT&T Park
10th St.
9th St.
8th St.
Van Ness Ave.

① Union Square
② Ride the Powell-Hyde Cable Car
③ Lombard Street
④ Fisherman's Wharf
⑤ Coit Tower
⑥ North Beach
⑦ City Lights
⑧ Mario's Bohemian Cigar Store
⑨ Washington Square Park
⑩ Chinatown
⑪ Tuttimelon
⑫ Golden Gate Fortune Cookie Factory

Previous page: Walk it, bike it, or drive it—you'll never forget your first time crossing the Golden Gate.

San Francisco has earned its reputation as America's most beautiful city. This first full-day tour introduces you to its four famous neighborhoods: Union Square, Fisherman's Wharf, North Beach, and Chinatown. After getting to Fisherman's Wharf, you can do the rest on foot—but public transportation options are listed just in case. **START: BART/Muni: Powell or Montgomery. Bus: 2, 3, 4, or 38 to Powell St.; 30 or 45 to Geary St. Cable car: Powell lines.**

① ★★ **Union Square.** Start your tour at this lively urban square, named for a series of uproarious pro-Union demonstrations staged here on the eve of the Civil War. In 2002, a $25-million restoration replaced stretches of lawn with a 245-foot-long (74m) granite floor and scattered greenery, turning it into a welcoming and memorable plaza. All that remains from the old square is the 90-foot (27m) Victory tower, dedicated by Theodore Roosevelt after the Spanish-American War. In winter, the square gets decked out with thousands of twinkling adornments, including a colossal Christmas tree. 🕘 *30 min.; best before 9am. Between Post, Geary, Stockton & Powell sts. BART: Powell or Montgomery. Bus: 2, 3, 4, or 38 to Powell St.; 30 or 45 to Geary St. Cable car: Powell lines.*

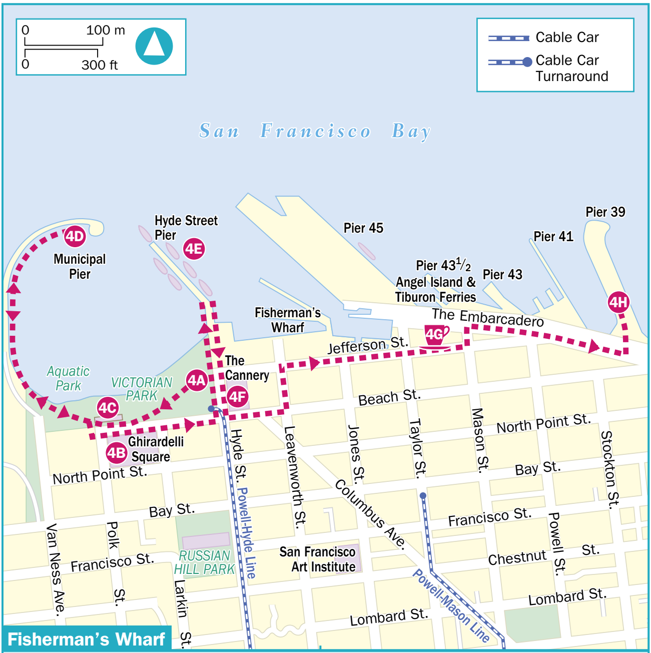
② ★ **kids** **Ride the Powell-Hyde Cable Car.** Head to the cable-car turnaround at Powell and Market streets and hop on the Powell-Hyde line. The first of these engineless, open-air vehicles started running in 1873. As the cable car takes you over Russian Hill, pay attention as you crest Hyde Street at Greenwich Street—you'll catch your first glimpse of the beautiful San Francisco Bay and its storied Alcatraz Island. 🕘 *30 min.; best before 9:30am. Powell & Market sts. $6 per ride.*

The Powell-Hyde cable car.

③ ★ **Lombard Street.** "The crookedest street in the world" is in fact not even the crookedest street in San Francisco (Vermont St. between 20th and 22nd sts. in Potrero Hill is curvier). Zigzags were added in the 1920s because the street's 27-degree pitch was too steep for automobiles. Cars are permitted only to descend, but pedestrians can take the stairs up or down on either side. The street is loveliest in spring, when the hydrangeas bloom. 🕘 *30 min.; best weekday mornings. Lombard St. (between Hyde & Leavenworth sts.). Cable car: Powell-Hyde line.*

④ ★★ **Fisherman's Wharf.** San Francisco's most visited attraction has history and lots to do. Though the wharf is rife with tacky souvenir shops and overpriced restaurants, it's still a must-see. Consider the following mini-tour, which highlights the wharf's most scenic spots and keeps time near the throngs to a minimum. *Hyde & Beach sts. www.fishermanswharf.org. Cable car:*

Powell-Hyde line to Fisherman's Wharf, Powell-Mason line to Taylor & Bay sts.; F streetcar to Jones & Beach sts. Bus 10, 30, or 47 to Van Ness Ave. & N. Point St.; 19 to Polk & Beach sts.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Cable Car
Cable Car Turnaround
San Francisco Bay
Hyde Street Pier
4E
4D
Municipal Pier
Pier 45
Pier 39
Pier 41
Pier 43½
Angel Island & Tiburon Ferries
Pier 43
4H
Fisherman's Wharf
The Embarcadero
4G
Jefferson St.
The Cannery
4F
4A
Aquatic Park
VICTORIAN PARK
4C
Beach St.
Ghirardelli Square
4B
North Point St.
Bay St.
Francisco St.
Chestnut St.
Lombard St.
Van Ness Ave.
Polk St.
Larkin St.
Hyde St.
Powell-Hyde Line
Leavenworth St.
Jones St.
Taylor St.
Mason St.
Columbus Ave.
Powell St.
Stockton St.
Powell-Mason Line
San Francisco Art Institute
RUSSIAN HILL PARK

Fisherman's Wharf

4A **Victorian Park** is where you'll alight from the cable car. Peruse the arts and crafts for sale as you walk toward 4B **Ghirardelli Square,** built in 1893 as Domingo Ghirardelli's chocolate factory. When the factory relocated in the 1960s, the building became a National Historic Landmark and now houses charming shops and eateries. The recently renovated 4C **Maritime Museum,** a three-story Art Deco structure shaped like an ocean liner, offers a free look at the city's seafaring past. A walk along 4D **Municipal Pier** affords excellent views of the Golden Gate Bridge and of 4E **Hyde Street Pier,** which berths refurbished antique ships, including a 19th-century square-rigger. 4F **The Cannery,** once a fruit-canning facility (hence the name), now houses stores, restaurants, and the National Maritime Visitors Center. At 4G kids ★ **Boudin Bakery,** which has been cranking out sourdough since 1849, order chowder in a bread bowl. Now that you're fortified, go brave the happy crowds at 4H **Pier 39.** The cluster of vocal sea lions at the end of the pier are a sight to behold. 🕒 *2–3 hr.; go in the morning to beat the crowds.*

⑤ **Coit Tower.** The 210-foot (63m) landmark atop Telegraph Hill was erected in 1933 with $125,000 bequeathed by local character Lillie Hitchcock Coit, who wished to add beauty to the city. Inside the tower's base are murals by several artists who studied under Diego Rivera. Commissioned as part of the New Deal, the murals have a pro-worker motif that caused a stir in their day. The fee to ascend the tower is worth it: A 360-degree city view awaits. While on Telegraph Hill, try to spot (or hear) its large flock of green parrots; no one's quite sure how they got here. 🕘 *45 min. From Fisherman's Wharf, walk or take bus 39 to Coit Tower.* ☎ *415/362-0808. Admission to the top $7 adults, $5 seniors and ages 12–17, $2 ages 5–11, free for kids 4 and younger. Daily 10am–5:30pm (9am–4:30pm Oct–Feb).*

⑥ ★★ **North Beach.** Immigrants from Genoa and Sicily who pioneered the Bay Area's fishing industry settled here in the 1870s, establishing a lively array of Italian restaurants, cafes, bakeries, and bars. In the 1950s, these spots became havens for some of the era's most influential writers and artists. Today, the neighborhood exudes a combination of Mediterranean warmth and bohemian spirit.

Coit Tower crowns Telegraph Hill.

Dazzling a crowd at the corner of Grant and Commercial streets in Chinatown.

Step into the famous ⑦ **City Lights Booksellers & Publishers** (at 261 Columbus Ave.), a great bookstore that's also an intimate tribute to Beat literature. 🕘 *1–2 hr. Walk from Coit Tower, or take bus 39 to Washington Sq. Best Mon–Sat from 11am–4pm. Shops are closed Sun and early mornings.*

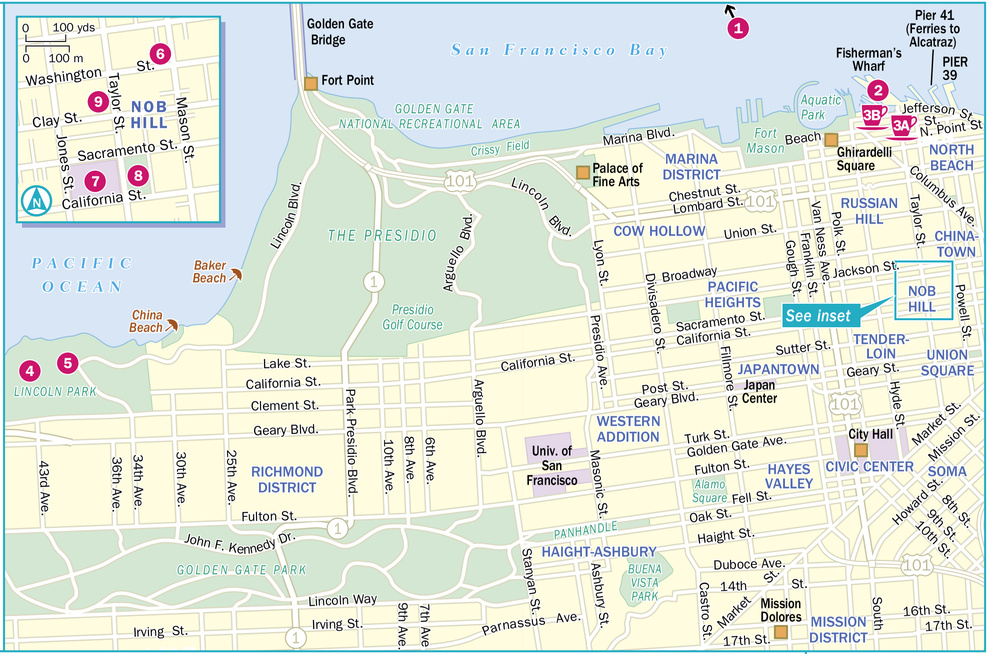
⑧ **Mario's Bohemian Cigar Store Café.** Pick up sandwiches here and enjoy them in ⑨ **Washington Square Park** across the street. *566 Columbus Ave. (at Union St.).* ☎ *415/362-0536. $.*

⑩ ★ **Chinatown.** More than 14,000 people live in San Francisco's most densely populated neighborhood. Walk down Grant Street for eclectic knickknacks and imports, and Stockton Street for authentic eateries, fragrant grocery stores, and herb shops.

At the end of these teeming streets, try the bubble tea at ⑪ **Tuttimelon.** *601 Broadway.* ☎ *415/398-2996. $.*

At 56 Ross Alley (between Washington and Jackson sts.) is ⑫ ★★ **Golden Gate Fortune Cookie Factory,** a hidden treasure where you can sample and buy prophetic confections.

The Best of San Francisco in Two Days


San Francisco Bay
PACIFIC OCEAN
Golden Gate Bridge
Fort Point
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATIONAL AREA
Crissy Field
Marina Blvd.
Palace of Fine Arts
MARINA DISTRICT
Fort Mason
Aquatic Park
Beach
Ghirardelli Square
Fisherman's Wharf
Pier 41 (Ferries to Alcatraz)
PIER 39
Jefferson St.
N. Point St.
St.
NORTH BEACH
Columbus Ave.
RUSSIAN HILL
Taylor St.
CHINA-TOWN
NOB HILL
See inset
Powell St.
Jackson St.
Polk St.
Van Ness Ave.
Franklin St.
Gough St.
Chestnut St.
Lombard St.
101
Union St.
COW HOLLOW
Broadway
PACIFIC HEIGHTS
Sacramento St.
California St.
Sutter St.
TENDER-LOIN
UNION SQUARE
Geary St.
Hyde St.
JAPANTOWN
Japan Center
Fillmore St.
Divisadero St.
Post St.
Geary Blvd.
Turk St.
Golden Gate Ave.
City Hall
CIVIC CENTER
Market St.
Mission St.
SOMA
Howard St.
8th St.
9th St.
10th St.
Fulton St.
HAYES VALLEY
Alamo Square
Fell St.
Oak St.
Haight St.
Duboce Ave.
14th
St.
Market
St.
Mission Dolores
MISSION DISTRICT
South
16th St.
17th St.
17th St.
Castro St.
BUENA VISTA PARK
HAIGHT-ASHBURY
Ashbury St.
PANHANDLE
Masonic St.
Univ. of San Francisco
WESTERN ADDITION
Presidio Ave.
Lyon St.
Lincoln Blvd.
THE PRESIDIO
Arguello Blvd.
Presidio Golf Course
1
California St.
Arguello Blvd.
Stanyan St.
Parnassus Ave.
6th Ave.
8th Ave.
10th Ave.
Park Presidio Blvd.
Lake St.
California St.
Clement St.
Geary Blvd.
RICHMOND DISTRICT
Fulton St.
25th Ave.
30th Ave.
34th Ave.
36th Ave.
43rd Ave.
John F. Kennedy Dr.
GOLDEN GATE PARK
Lincoln Way
Irving St.
Irving St.
9th Ave.
7th Ave
Baker Beach
China Beach
LINCOLN PARK
Lincoln Blvd.
1
2
3A
3B
4
5
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0 100 m
Washington
St.
6
9
Taylor St.
NOB HILL
Mason St.
Clay St.
Jones St.
Sacramento St.
7
8
California St.
N

1 Alcatraz Island
2 Red & White Fleet Bay Cruise
3A Boudin Sourdough Bakery & Café
3B Alioto's
4 Lincoln Park
5 California Palace of the Legion of Honor
6 Cable Car Museum and Powerhouse
7 Grace Cathedral
8 Huntington Park
9 Nob Hill

0 1/2 mi
0 1/2 km

If you have 2 days, plan your first day as detailed on p 165. For your second day, start with a major highlight—a visit to Alcatraz. Reserved tickets are required, but if you didn't plan ahead, an alternative bay cruise is listed below. After Alcatraz (or the cruise), visit Lincoln Park, a less visited but still striking corner of the city, and if time permits, relive the glories of 19th-century San Francisco on Nob Hill. **START: Pier 41, Fisherman's Wharf. Cable car: Powell-Mason. Bus: 30. Streetcar: F.**

Book ahead for tours of Alcatraz Island—including day tours, garden tours, and a creepy nighttime tour.

① ★★★ **Alcatraz Island.** Spanish for "pelican," Alcatraz was so named in 1775 by Juan Manuel Ayala for the birds nesting on its rocky shores. From the 1850s to 1933, the U.S. military used Alcatraz as a fort to protect the bay and its shoreline. In 1934, the government converted the island to a maximum-security prison for the country's most hardened criminals, including Al Capone, "Machine Gun" Kelly, and Robert "The Birdman" Stroud. Given its sheer cliffs, frigid waters, and treacherous currents, Alcatraz was considered inescapable. However, the prison's upkeep cost a fortune; all supplies had to come by boat. After three convicted bank robbers (Frank Lee Morris and brothers Clarence and John Anglin) escaped in 1962 using sharpened spoons and a makeshift raft, the prison closed. The island remained unoccupied until 1969, when Native Americans took it over, bringing their civil-rights issues to the forefront. They were removed in 1971, but not before Congress passed more than 50 legislative proposals supporting tribal self-rule. Today, the National Park Service manages Alcatraz. Once there, you'll receive a headset that plays an audio tour that includes riveting tales from former guards and inmates. From October to mid-February, you can tour the island on a walking path. For an eerie evening experience, take the "Alcatraz After Hours" tour. 🕘 *2–3 hr., including ferry ride. Take the first ferry of the day, if possible. Wear a jacket and walking shoes; it's an uphill walk from the ferry landing to the cellblock (motorized carts carry visitors who need them). The ferry sells snacks, but there's no food on* *the island. Pier 33 at 1398 Embarcadero (at Bay St.), Fisherman's Wharf. ☎ 415/981-7625. www.nps.gov/alcatraz.* ***Tip:*** *The early-bird 9am tour is the least crowded. Admission (ferry and audio tour): $28 adult, $26.25 seniors 62+, $28 kids 12–17, $17 kids 5–11, free for kids 4 & younger, $85 family (2 adults & 2 kids ages 5–11). Night tours and combination Alcatraz & Angel Island tours are additional. Winter daily 9:30am–2:15pm; summer daily 9am–3:55pm. Ferries run approx. every half-hour. Arrive 30 min. before departure in summer (45 min. in winter). Night tours depart at 6:10 & 6:45pm in summer; 4:20 & 5:10pm in winter. Bus: 8X or 47 (then walk a block or 2). Cable car: Powell-Mason line (then walk 6 blocks or transfer to streetcar). Streetcar: F (to Bay St. stop).*

② **kids** ★ **Red & White Fleet Bay Cruise.** If you were unable to pre-reserve Alcatraz tickets, take this 1-hour bay cruise (named after Stanford University's school colors) with audio narration. You'll travel under the Golden Gate Bridge and around Alcatraz. ⏱ *1 hr. Pier 43½. ☎ 415/673-2900. www.redandwhite.com. Ferry ride & audio tour: $26, $18 youth 5–17, free for children 4 & younger. Check the website for discount fares. Transport: see bullet 1.*

No SF visit is complete without trying the city's famous bread. If you skipped it yesterday, eat at 3A ★ **kids** **Boudin Sourdough Bakery & Café** today. *160 Jefferson St. ☎ 415/928-1849. $.* Otherwise, head to 3B **Alioto's** for a sit-down Italian meal with a view. *No. 8 Fisherman's Wharf at Taylor St. ☎ 415/673-0183. $$.*

Fresh Dungeness crab at Fisherman's Wharf.

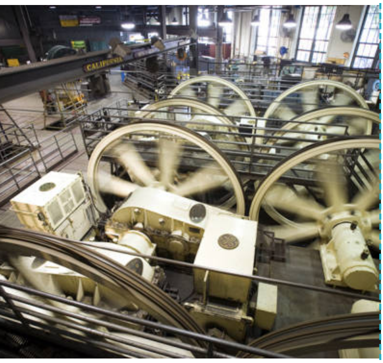
④ **Lincoln Park.** This lovely park in the city's northwest corner has expansive lawns, eucalyptus trees, an 18-hole golf course, and gorgeous ocean views. Walk north to the Land's End trail head for a view of the Marin Headlands—and the world's most famous bridge. ⏱ *30 min.; best in the afternoon, when the fog has burned off and the sun makes the Marin hills appear golden. Clement & 33rd aves. Powell-Hyde cable car to Geary St., transfer to bus 38 to Geary Blvd. & 33rd Ave.; then walk or take bus 18 to Legion of Honor. To save time (but not money), you may want to catch a taxi.*

⑤ ★★ **California Palace of the Legion of Honor.** Adding to Lincoln Park's splendor is this neoclassical memorial to California soldiers who died in World War I. This exact replica of Paris's Legion of Honor Palace opened on Armistice Day in 1924. Its fine-art collection spans 4,000 years and includes Monets and Rembrandts, plus tapestries, prints, and drawings from around the globe. The world-class collection of Rodin sculptures includes an original cast of *The Thinker*. ⏱ *1 hr. 100 34th Ave. (at Clement St., then into Lincoln Park). ☎ 415/750-3600. www.thinker.org. Admission $10 adults, $7 seniors 65+, $6 youths 13–17, free for kids 12 and younger,* *free to all first Tues of each month. Tues–Sun 9:30am–5:15pm. Transport: see bullet 4.*

⑥ **kids** **Cable Car Museum and Powerhouse.** When British-born engineer Andrew Hallidie saw a horse and its heavy carriage fall backward down a steep San Francisco hill, he vowed to create a mechanical transportation device for the city. By 1873, the first cable car had scaled Clay Street. Cable cars have no engines—instead, they're attached to an electrically powered cable that runs at a constant 9½-mph (15kmph) rate through an underground rail. Inside this free, fascinating museum, you'll see the cables that carry the cars. 🕘 *20 min. 1201 Mason St. (at Washington St.).* ☎ *415/474-1887. www.cablecarmuseum.org. Free admission. Daily 10am–5pm; until 6pm Apr–Sept. Closed major holidays. From Lyon & Greenwich sts., take the 45 bus toward Caltrain, then transfer to the Powell-Mason cable car. Or, to save time, take a cab from the Legion of Honor.*

⑦ ★★ **Grace Cathedral.** After the Crocker mansion was destroyed by the 1906 earthquake and subsequent fires, the Crockers donated its site to the Episcopal Church. In 1964, Grace Cathedral was complete. Pay special attention to the main doors—stunning replicas of Ghiberti's bronze Doors of Paradise on the Baptistery of Florence—and the Singing Tower to the right of the main entrance, with its 44-bell carillon. 🕘 *25 min. 1100 California St. (at Taylor St.). www.gracecathedral.org (check website for free docent-led tours).* ☎ *415/749-6300. Free admission. Mon–Fri 7am–6pm; Sat 8am–6pm; Sun 8am–7pm. Bus: 1. Walk or take any cable-car line.*

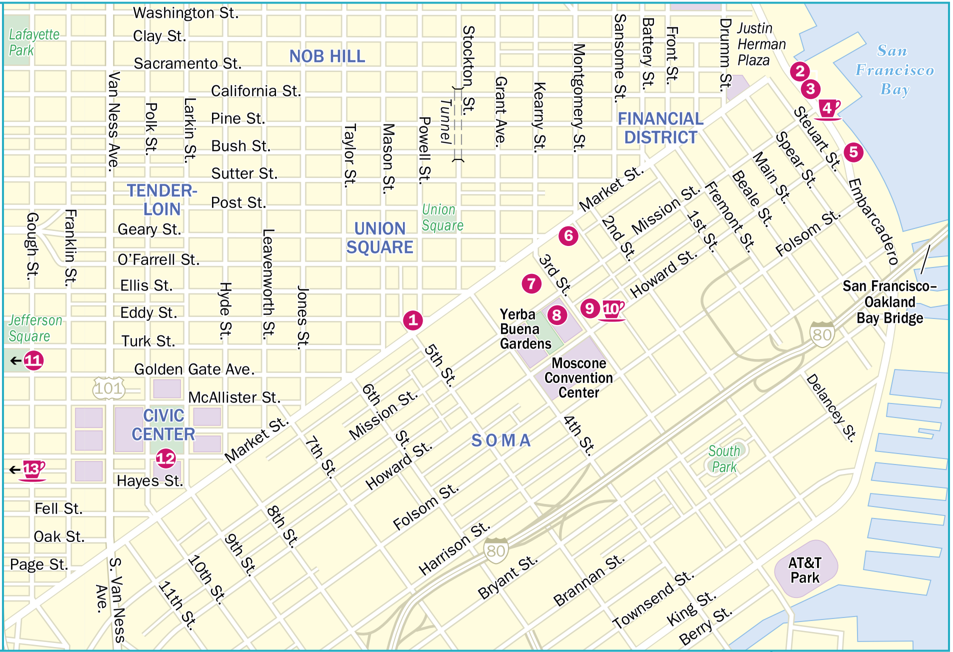
Learn how a cable car works at the Cable Car Museum.



⑧ **kids** **Huntington Park.** David Colton, who helped build the Southern Pacific Railroad, had his mansion here until he sold it to a fellow railroad magnate, Collis Huntington, in 1892. The mansion burned as a result of the 1906 quake, and the lot lay empty for 9 years until Huntington donated it to the city. Today, the park is a lovely urban oasis. It's still framed by the granite walls that were part of the Colton estate. 🕘 *15 min. Taylor & California sts. Bus: 1. Cable car: All lines.*

⑨ **Nob Hill.** This famous hillcrest neighborhood is named for its wealthy former residents, or "nabobs," as San Francisco elites were then known (today, hipsters take to calling this "snob hill"). The "Big Four" railroad barons of the Southern Pacific Railroad—Leland Stanford, Mark Hopkins, Charles Crocker, and Collis Huntington—built ostentatious mansions here in the late 1870s, all doomed for destruction by the fires following the 1906 quake. Look around to see some of the city's most prestigious hotels and, for a magnificent view of the city (and perhaps a tasty nightcap), head up to the InterContinental's **Top of the Mark** (p 193), a fancy penthouse lounge. 🕘 *20 min. Taylor & Sacramento sts. Bus: 1 from Clement St. & 33rd Ave. to Taylor & Sacramento sts.*

The Best of San Francisco in Three Days


San Francisco Bay
Justin Herman Plaza
Embarcadero
Steuart St.
Spear St.
Main St.
Beale St.
Fremont St.
1st St.
2nd St.
3rd St.
4th St.
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10th St.
11th St.
Folsom St.
Howard St.
Mission St.
Market St.
Harrison St.
Bryant St.
Brannan St.
Townsend St.
King St.
Berry St.
Delancey St.
San Francisco–Oakland Bay Bridge
80
AT&T Park
South Park
Moscone Convention Center
Yerba Buena Gardens
SOMA
FINANCIAL DISTRICT
Drumm St.
Front St.
Battery St.
Sansome St.
Montgomery St.
Kearny St.
Grant Ave.
Stockton St.
Tunnel
Powell St.
Mason St.
Taylor St.
Jones St.
Leavenworth St.
Hyde St.
Larkin St.
Polk St.
Van Ness Ave.
Franklin St.
Gough St.
Washington St.
Clay St.
Sacramento St.
California St.
Pine St.
Bush St.
Sutter St.
Post St.
Geary St.
O'Farrell St.
Ellis St.
Eddy St.
Turk St.
Golden Gate Ave.
McAllister St.
Hayes St.
Fell St.
Oak St.
Page St.
S. Van Ness Ave.
NOB HILL
TENDER-LOIN
UNION SQUARE
Union Square
CIVIC CENTER
Lafayette Park
Jefferson Square
101
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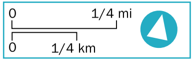
13

1. F-Market streetcar
2. Ferry Building
3. Ferry Plaza Farmer's Market
4. Frog Hollow Farm
5. Embarcadero Promenade
6. Garden Court
7. SoMa (South of Market)
8. Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
9. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA)
10. Caffe Museo
11. Civic Center
12. California Academy of Sciences
13. The Beach Chalet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If you've already made your way through "The Best in Two Days," you'll find that this third full-day tour gives you a taste of the city's epicurean underpinnings, as well as its rich artistic and cultural life. Devote an entire day for this tour. It can be done on foot, though the antique F-Market streetcars are attractions unto themselves. ***Note:*** Though the Civic Center is just a few blocks from SoMa, the east-west blocks are quite long. **START: From Union Sq., hop on the F-Market streetcar at the Powell St. station. Exit at the Ferry Terminal loop.**

① **kids** ★ **F-Market streetcar.** These colorful, character-filled cars rumble up and down Market Street and along the bay's bustling, scenic waterfront. The vintage trolleys were imported from around the world, so take a look to see which city yours is from. 🕒 *15 min. From Union Sq., enter at the Powell St. station; exit at the Ferry Terminal loop. Fare $2 adults, 75¢ seniors 65+ & kids 5–17; free for kids 4 and younger. Avoid rush hour (Mon–Fri, before 9:30am & 4:30–6:30pm).*

② ★★ **Ferry Building.** This 1898 building reopened in 2003 after a multimillion-dollar renovation. Outside is a 240-foot (72m) clock tower. Inside, a collection of gourmet boutiques sell an impressive array of specialty foods. Make your way to the back of the building for a view of the Bay Bridge—and try to visit on a farmers' market day (see bullet 3 and p 21). 🕒 *1 hr. 1 Ferry Building (at the Embarcadero & Market St.). Minimum hours: Mon–Fri 10am–6pm; Sat 9am–6pm; Sun 11am–5pm (hours for individual businesses may vary). www.ferrybuildingmarketplace.com. F or any Market St. streetcar to the Ferry Bldg. or Embarcadero; bus 2, 7, 14, 21, 66, or 71 to Steuart & Market sts.*

③ ★★★ **Ferry Plaza Farmers Market.** Tuesdays and Saturdays (and from spring to fall, Thurs and Sun too), dozens of regional food producers set up booths just outside the Ferry Building. Saturday mornings are busiest, as locals make their regular trek to stock up on fruits and vegetables, fresh-baked goods, hand-crafted cheeses, and ready-to-bloom flowers. Saturdays also bring booths from which city restaurants serve gourmet breakfasts. Given San Francisco's passion for local, organic food, the friendly farmers are ready and willing to go into deep detail about where their wares came from and how they were produced. 🕒 *1 hr. 1 Ferry Building (at the Embarcadero & Market St.).* ☎ *415/291-3276. Tues & Thurs 10am–2pm; Sat 8am–2pm. Also see p 21.*

Hog Island Oyster Co. at the Ferry Building is a good spot for fresh seafood and a beer by the bay.

4 **Frog Hollow Farm.** Grab coffee and a fruit-filled pastry here before strolling the scenic waterfront. *Ferry Building Marketplace.* ☎ *415/445-0990. $.*

⑤ ★ **Embarcadero Promenade.** The 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake encouraged city leaders to decommission the ugly elevated freeway that once obscured this lovely stretch of waterfront that extends from AT&T Park to Fisherman's Wharf. Its wide sidewalk and sweeping bay views make this a perennial favorite among pedestrians and joggers. Notice the Embarcadero Ribbon, a 2½-mile (4km) continuous line of glass encased in concrete. The 13-foot-tall (3.9m) metal pylons and bronze plaques embedded in the sidewalk are imprinted with photographs, drawings, poetry, and historical facts. 🕘 *30 min.–1 hr. Return to Market St. to catch the F-Market streetcar to the Montgomery St. station, or walk there along Market St.*

⑥ **Garden Court.** The extravagant Palace Hotel astounded San Franciscans and bankrupted its owner, who allegedly committed suicide a day before the 1875 grand opening. Three decades later, the hotel was ravaged by one of the many fires following the 1906 earthquake. It was restored and reopened in 1909, along with the magnificent Garden Court. This impressive atrium's domed ceiling is made from 80,000 glass panes and houses the **Garden Court Restaurant** (p 183). After absorbing this court's grandeur, step into the **Pied Piper Bar** for a look at the $2.5-million Maxfield Parrish mural—and maybe for a sip of the "Charlie Chaplin," an enjoyable absinthe-and-rye cocktail. 🕘 *20 min. 2 New Montgomery St. (at Market St.).* ☎ *415/546-5089. Daily 6:30–10:30am & 11:30am–2pm, except Sun 7–10am & brunch 10:30am–1:30pm & Sat tea 1–2:30pm. BART/Muni: Powell or Montgomery.*

⑦ ★★ **SoMa (South of Market) District.** This one-time industrial area south of Market Street has transformed into a major center for museums, galleries, and major-league baseball. 🕘 *2–4 hr. to stroll through the neighborhood; visit during daylight hours.* ***Note:*** *SFMOMA (see bullet 9) is closed Wed.*

⑧ ★ **kids** **Yerba Buena Center for the Arts** is SoMa's cultural

The Garden Court's ceiling is a glittering masterpiece of glass.

anchor. It serves as an arts-and-entertainment hub, with cultural programs, oasis-like gardens, bowling lanes, and an ice-skating rink. Pay tribute at the poignant Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial and its 50-foot (15m) waterfall, ride the Zeum carousel, or catch a new release at the Metreon movie theater. 🕘 *1 hr. 701 Mission St. (esplanade garden on Mission between 3rd & 4th St.); Metreon at 101 4th St.; Zeum at 760 Howard St.* ☎ *415/978-2700. www.ybca.org.* 🕘 *1–3 hr. Between 3rd & 4th sts., Mission & Folsom sts.*

⑨ ★★ **San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA).** In 1995, SFMOMA moved into its $62-million home designed by architect Mario Botta. Its permanent collection includes more than 15,000 works by the likes of Henri Matisse, Jackson Pollock, and Georgia O'Keeffe. The first major museum to have recognized photography as an art form, SFMOMA also shows the works of Ansel Adams, Man Ray, and other luminaries. Not enough of the permanent collection is on display at any one time, but temporary exhibits are typically superb. 🕘 *1½ hr. 151 3rd St. (between Mission & Howard sts.).* ☎ *415/357-4000. www.sfmoma.org. Admission $18 adults, $12 seniors 62+, $11 students with ID, free for kids 12 and younger. Half-price Thurs 6–8:45pm. Free to all 1st Tues of the month. Thurs 11am–8:45pm; Fri–Tues 11am–5:45pm. Closed Wed & major holidays. Opens at 10am in summer. Bus: 30 or 45. BART/Muni: Montgomery St. Best time: weekdays.*

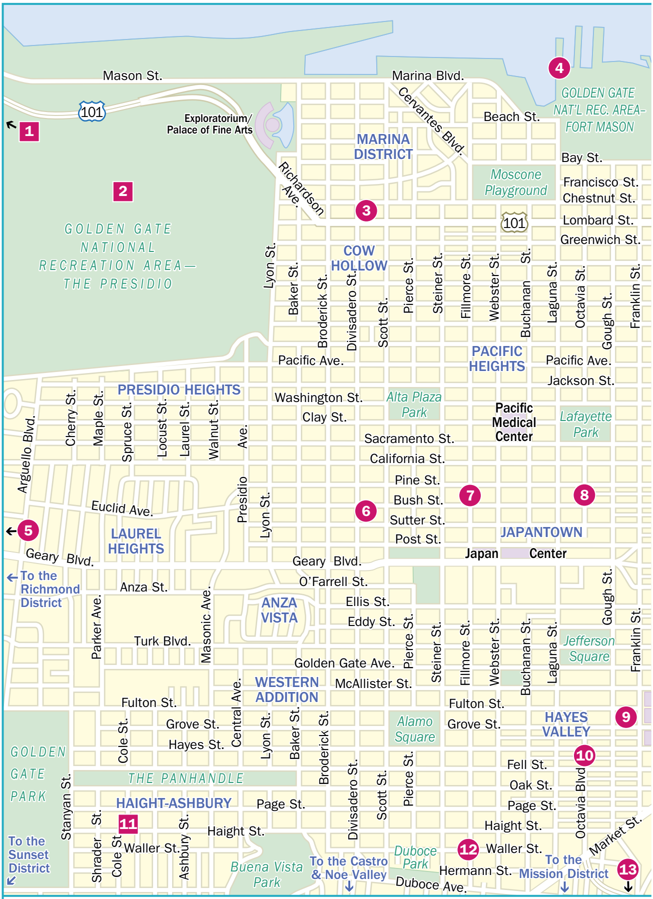
10 **Caffe Museo.** SFMOMA's on-site cafe offers excellent soups, salads, and sandwiches. *151 3rd St.* ☎ *415/357-4500. $.*

⑪ ★ **Civic Center.** Less than a decade after the 1906 earthquake destroyed SF's original City Hall, architect Arthur Brown erected a lavish Beaux Arts–style administrative and cultural center to take its place. Buildings here include extravagant City Hall itself, topped with a 308-foot-tall (92m) dome; the 376,000-square-foot (35,000-sq.-m) main public library; the Asian Art Museum, recently transformed by the architect who did France's Musée d'Orsay; and the War Memorial Opera House, where the 1951 U.S.–Japan peace accord was signed. 🕘 *1 hr. Most Civic Center buildings are bordered by Hayes, Franklin & Hyde sts. & Golden Gate Ave. Farmers' market Sun & Wed in U.N. Plaza. Best time: weekdays during daylight hours.*

⑫ ★★★ **kids** **California Academy of Sciences.** This science-and-nature museum in Golden Gate Park is an expansive, interactive world of discovery that mesmerizes everyone who visits. Adults-only "Nightlife" parties Thursdays at 6pm add booze and music acts. 🕘 *2–4 hr., weekday afternoons are best, as mornings are full with school tours. 55 Music Concourse Dr.* ☎ *415/379-8000. www.calacademy.org. Admission $30 adults; $25 seniors 65+, students & ages 12–17; $20 for ages 4–11; free for kids 3 and younger; free for all the 1st Wed of the month. Mon–Sat 9:30am–5pm, Sun 11am–5pm. Bus: 5 or 44. Streetcar: N-Judah.*

13 **The Beach Chalet.** Dinner at this airy Golden Gate Park restaurant and brewery near the ocean is a lively affair made better by good-quality American food. Don't miss the 1930s–era fresco murals in the adjoining Golden Gate Park Visitors Center. *1000 Great Hwy. at Ocean Beach.* ☎ *415/386-8439. $$. Bus: 5.*

San Francisco **Lodging & Dining**


Mason St.
Marina Blvd.
101
Exploratorium/
Palace of Fine Arts
Cervantes Blvd.
Beach St.
GOLDEN GATE NAT'L REC. AREA– FORT MASON
MARINA DISTRICT
Bay St.
Richardson Ave.
Moscone Playground
Francisco St.
Chestnut St.
Lombard St.
Greenwich St.
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA— THE PRESIDIO
COW HOLLOW
Lyon St.
Baker St.
Broderick St.
Divisadero St.
Scott St.
Pierce St.
Steiner St.
Fillmore St.
Webster St.
Buchanan St.
Laguna St.
Octavia St.
Gough St.
Franklin St.
Pacific Ave.
PACIFIC HEIGHTS
Jackson St.
PRESIDIO HEIGHTS
Washington St.
Clay St.
Alta Plaza Park
Pacific Medical Center
Lafayette Park
Arguello Blvd.
Cherry St.
Maple St.
Spruce St.
Locust St.
Laurel St.
Walnut St.
Presidio Ave.
Sacramento St.
California St.
Pine St.
Bush St.
Sutter St.
Post St.
Euclid Ave.
LAUREL HEIGHTS
JAPANTOWN
Japan Center
Geary Blvd.
To the Richmond District
Anza St.
O'Farrell St.
ANZA VISTA
Ellis St.
Eddy St.
Parker Ave.
Masonic Ave.
Turk Blvd.
Jefferson Square
Golden Gate Ave.
WESTERN ADDITION
McAllister St.
Fulton St.
Central Ave.
Grove St.
Hayes St.
Alamo Square
HAYES VALLEY
GOLDEN GATE PARK
Cole St.
THE PANHANDLE
Fell St.
Oak St.
Stanyan St.
HAIGHT-ASHBURY
Page St.
Shrader St.
Ashbury St.
Haight St.
Waller St.
Octavia Blvd.
Market St.
To the Sunset District
Buena Vista Park
To the Castro & Noe Valley
Duboce Park
Hermann St.
To the Mission District
Duboce Ave.
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
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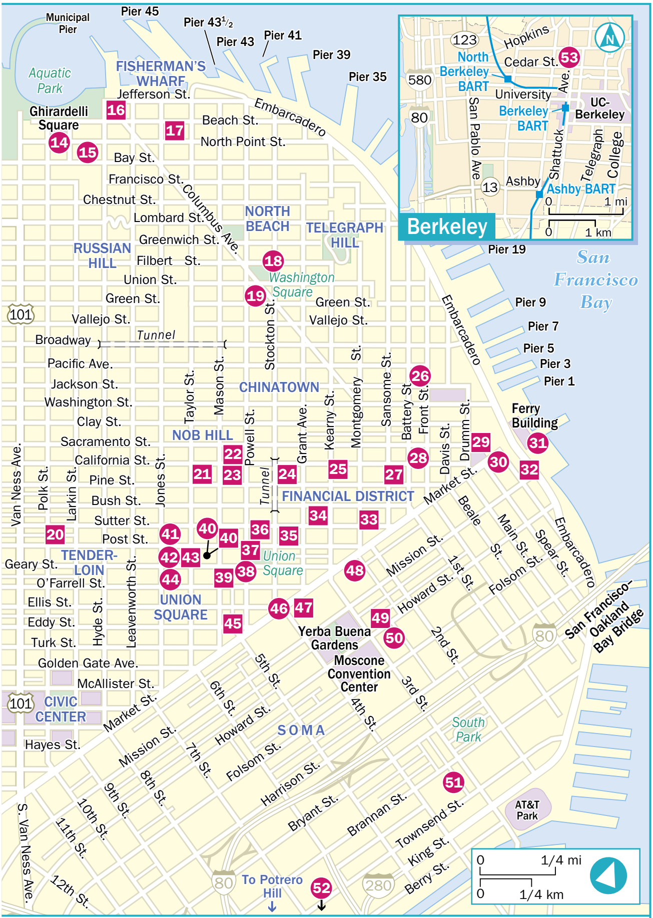
12
13

DINING ●	
A16	3
Aqua	26
Boogaloos	13
Boulevard	31
Chez Papa	52
Cliff House	5
Crumpet & Crown	14
Dottie's True Blue Café	44
Fifth Floor	46
Fleur de Lys	41
Florio Bar & Cafe	7
Foreign Cinema	13
Garden Court Restaurant	48
Gary Danko	14
Ghirardelli Soda Fountain & Chocolate Shop	15
Greens	4
Hawthorne Lane	50
Indian Oven	12
Jardiniere	9
Kokkari	26
L'Osteria del Forno	19
Mama's	18
Michael Mina	38
Millennium	42
One Market	30
Perbacco	28
Postrio	40
Quince	8
The Slanted Door	31
Suppenküche	10
Tacqueria Pancho Villa	13
Tortilla Heights	6
25 Lusk	51
BERKELEY INSET	
Chez Panisse	53


Berkeley
123
Hopkins
North Berkeley BART
Cedar St.
53
580
University
Ave.
UC-Berkeley
80
San Pablo Ave
Berkeley BART
Shattuck
Telegraph
College
Ashby
13
Ashby BART
0 1 mi
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N
Municipal Pier
Pier 45
Pier 43½
Pier 43
Pier 41
Pier 39
Pier 35
Aquatic Park
FISHERMAN'S WHARF
Jefferson St.
Ghirardelli Square
16
17
14
15
Beach St.
North Point St.
Embarcadero
Bay St.
Francisco St.
Chestnut St.
Columbus Ave.
Lombard St.
NORTH BEACH
TELEGRAPH HILL
Greenwich St.
RUSSIAN HILL
Filbert St.
18
Washington Square
Union St.
19
Green St.
Vallejo St.
101
Broadway
Tunnel
Pacific Ave.
Jackson St.
Washington St.
Clay St.
Sacramento St.
California St.
Pine St.
Bush St.
Sutter St.
Post St.
Geary St.
O'Farrell St.
Ellis St.
Eddy St.
Turk St.
Golden Gate Ave.
McAllister St.
Hayes St.
Van Ness Ave.
Polk St.
Larkin St.
Hyde St.
Leavenworth St.
Jones St.
Taylor St.
Mason St.
Powell St.
Stockton St.
Grant Ave.
Kearny St.
Montgomery St.
Sansome St.
Battery St.
Front St.
Davis St.
Drumm St.
CHINATOWN
NOB HILL
FINANCIAL DISTRICT
TENDER-LOIN
UNION SQUARE
CIVIC CENTER
Union Square
Pier 19
San Francisco Bay
Pier 9
Pier 7
Pier 5
Pier 3
Pier 1
Ferry Building
Market St.
Beale St.
Main St.
Spear St.
Mission St.
Howard St.
1st St.
Folsom St.
2nd St.
3rd St.
4th St.
5th St.
6th St.
7th St.
8th St.
9th St.
10th St.
11th St.
12th St.
S. Van Ness Ave.
Harrison St.
Bryant St.
Brannan St.
Townsend St.
King St.
Berry St.
San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge
Yerba Buena Gardens
Moscone Convention Center
SOMA
South Park
AT&T Park
To Potrero Hill
280
0 1/4 mi
0 1/4 km
20
21
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33
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36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52

LODGING ■	
Adagio	43
The Argonaut	16
Casa Madrona	1
Clift Hotel	40
Fairmont Hotel	22
Four Seasons	47
Galleria Park Hotel	33
Hotel Abri	45
The Huntington Hotel	21
Hyatt at Fisherman's Wharf	17
Hyatt Regency San Francisco	29
Inn at the Presidio	2
InterContinental Mark Hopkins	23
King George Hotel	39
Mandarin Oriental	27
Omni	25
The Palace Hotel	37
Red Victorian	11
Ritz-Carlton	24
Sir Francis Drake	36
Taj Campton Place Hotel	35
Triton	34
Vitale	32
Vertigo	20
W San Francisco	49
Westin St. Francis	37

Lodging A to Z

★ **Adagio** UNION SQUARE Sleek charm for a good price in a central location. Double queen rooms are a great deal for families. The in-house **Cortez restaurant** shines. *550 Geary St. (between Jones & Taylor sts.).* ☎ *800/228-8830 or 415/775-5000. www.hoteladagiosf.com. 173 units. Doubles $207–$725. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 2, 3, 4, or 38. BART/Muni: Powell St. Map p 176.*

★★ kids **The Argonaut** FISHERMAN'S WHARF The beautifully restored 1907 brick building in the Maritime National Historical Park has nautical-themed decor, a great location, and bay views. Best choice at the wharf. *495 Jefferson St. (corner of Jefferson & Hyde sts.).* ☎ *800/790-1415. www.argonauthotel.com. 252 units. Doubles $256–$713. AE, DC, MC, V. Bus: 10 or 30. Cable car: Powell-Hyde. Map p 176.*

★ **Casa Madrona** SAUSALITO Though it isn't in SF proper, the coastal village of Sausalito is a great place to rest your head just across the Golden Gate Bridge. Contemporary-styled Casa Madrona offers comfortable beds and attentive service. *801 Bridgeway.* ☎ *415/332-0502. www.casamadrona.com. 63 units. Doubles $279 & up. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Map p 176.*

★★ **Cavallo Point** SAUSALITO Situated on Fort Baker, a former U.S. Army post with unbeatable views of the bay and the bridge, lodging options here are welcomingly upscale. The eco-friendly hotel's spa is excellent, as is its restaurant, **Murray Circle.** *601 Murray Circle.* ☎ *888/651-2003. www.cavallopoint.com. 142 units. Doubles from $195. AE, DC, MC, V.*

★ **Clift Hotel** UNION SQUARE Hotelier Ian Schrager worked with Philippe Starck to design this über-hip downtown property. Most rooms scream minimalism, and bathrooms are stylish but small. The beautiful and historic **Redwood Room** turns into a stylish after-dark scene (p 192). *495 Geary St. (at Taylor St.).* ☎ *800/697-1791 or 415/775-4700. www.clifthotel.com. 389 units. Doubles $216–$655. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 2, 3, 4, 27, or 38. Map p 176.*

★★★ **The Fairmont** NOB HILL This 1907 landmark makes an immediate impression. A recent $85-million restoration recaptured architect Julia Morgan's (of Hearst Castle fame) original design. This is where U.S. presidents stay, and where the U.N. charter was drafted in 1945. For great views, choose a room in the Tower Building. *950 Mason St. (at California St.).* ☎ *800/441-1414 or 415/772-5000. www.fairmont.com/sanfrancisco. 591 units. Doubles $179–$669. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 1. Cable car: All. Map p 176.*

Muted colors create a tranquil vibe in the rooms of the trendy Clift Hotel.

★★★ **Four Seasons** SOMA This luxurious hotel's rooms have plush furnishings and large marble bathrooms. Impeccable service and access to the massive Sports Club/LA add to the appeal. *757 Market St. (at 3rd St.).* ☎ *415/633-3000. www.fourseasons.com/sanfrancisco. 277 units. Doubles begin at $605. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. BART/Muni: Montgomery St. Map p 176.*

★ **Hotel Abri** UNION SQUARE Though it's in the middle of it all, this recently renovated property manages to maintain a homey, relaxed feel. Decor and service are both lovely. *127 Ellis St. (between Powell & Cyril Magnin sts.).* ☎ *415/392-8800. www.hotelabrisf.com. 91 units. Doubles $193–$310. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 2, 3, 4. BART/Muni: Powell St. Cable car: Powell lines. Map p 176.*

★★ **Hotel Majestic** PACIFIC HEIGHTS Furnished with intriguing European antiques, the Majestic provides an escape from the rough edges of modern life. *1500 Sutter St. (between Octavia & Gough sts.).* ☎ *800/869-8966 or 415/441-1100. www.thehotelmajestic.com. 58 units. Doubles $110–$250 w/breakfast. AE, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 2, 3, or 4.*

★ **Hotel Triton** UNION SQUARE This colorful, rock-themed hotel with suites designed by celebrities offers free Friday-night wine parties with tarot-card readings and chair massages. Rooms at this Kimpton property are small but newly renovated. *342 Grant Ave. (at Bush St.).* ☎ *800/800-1299 or 415/394-0500. www.hoteltriton.com. 140 units. Doubles $175–$370. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 2, 3, 4, 15, 30. BART/Muni: Montgomery St. Map p 176.*

★★ **Hotel Vitale** SOMA Zen-like rooms provide excellent views and a great location right across from the Ferry Building. The top-floor spa is not to be missed. Downstairs, the Italian cuisine at **Americano restaurant** impresses. *8 Mission St. (at Embarcadero).* ☎ *415/278-3700. www.hotelvitale.com. 200 units. Doubles $259 & up. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Muni: F, M, or N. Map p 176.*

★★★ **The Huntington Hotel & Nob Hill Spa** NOB HILL A discreet but very upscale choice. Rooms are sizable and seven suites have kitchens. The spa is magnificent. *1075 California St. (at Powell St.).* ☎ *800/227-4683 or 415/474-5400. www.huntingtonhotel.com. 135 units. Doubles $255 & up. AE, DC, MC, V. Bus: 1. Cable car: All. Map p 176.*

kids **Hyatt at Fisherman's Wharf** FISHERMAN'S WHARF Best of the wharf chain hotels. Rooms sport a clean, contemporary look. Look forward to luxury beds, an outdoor pool, and a sports-bar-like restaurant. *555 N. Point St. (between Jones & Taylor sts.).* ☎ *415/563-1234. www.fishermanswharf.hyatt.com. 313 units. Doubles $269–$349. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 10 or 30. Streetcar: F. Map p 176.*

★ **Hyatt Regency San Francisco** FINANCIAL DISTRICT This hulking hotel has a 17-story atrium, spacious rooms, some fine views, the Embarcadero Center next door, and the Ferry Building just across the street. *5 Embarcadero Center (at Market St. by the Embarcadero).* ☎ *800/233-1234 or 415/788-1234. www.sanfranciscoregency.hyatt.com. 802 units. Doubles $178–$399. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. BART/Muni: Embarcadero. Map p 176.*

★★ **Inn at the Presidio** PRESIDIO This Georgian Revival building dates back to 1903, having served as army officers' quarters until 1994. In 2012, it debuted as a charming inn whose rates include breakfast and a nightly wine-and-cheese reception.

42 Moraga Ave. ☎ *415/800-7356. www.innatthepresidio.com. 22 units. Doubles from $195. AE, DC, MC, V. Map p 176.*

★★★ **InterContinental Mark Hopkins** NOB HILL Plush rooms provide stellar views, and the **Top of the Mark** sky-lounge is a stunning place to dine. An extra $50 per day grants access to the club lounge and its food. *1 Nob Hill (at Mason & California sts.).* ☎ *888/424-6835 or 415/392-3434. www.intercontinentalmarkhopkins.com. 380 units. Doubles $209 & up. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 1. Cable car: All. Map p 176.*

King George Hotel UNION SQUARE Popular with European tourists, this 1912 hotel offers modern amenities and handsome (albeit petite) rooms. On weekends and holidays, English afternoon tea is served in its Windsor Tea Room. *334 Mason St. (between Geary & O'Farrell sts.).* ☎ *800/288-6005 or 415/781-5050. www.kinggeorge.com. 163 units. Doubles $105–$430. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 2, 3, 4, or 38. Cable car: Powell lines. BART/Muni: Powell St. Map p 176.*

★★★ **Mandarin Oriental** FINANCIAL DISTRICT Atop SF's third-tallest building, the Mandarin affords jaw-dropping views. Every room has international flavor and an oversize bed. Regal service impresses. *222 Sansome St. (between Pine & California sts.).* ☎ *800/622-0404 or 415/276-9888. www.mandarinoriental.com/sanfranciso. 158 units. Doubles $495 & up. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. BART/Muni: Montgomery St. Cable car: California. Map p 176.*

★★ **The Palace Hotel** SOMA Over-the-top decor encompasses the landmark **Garden Court Restaurant** (p 183). Large guest rooms boast marble bathrooms and 14-foot (4.2m) ceilings. *2 New Montgomery St. (at Market St.).* ☎ *415/512-1111. www.sfpalace.com. 553 units. Doubles $179–$559. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. BART/Muni: Montgomery St. Map p 176.*

Red Victorian HAIGHT There should be a sign in front of this eccentric Haight-Ashbury B&B that reads: "WELCOME BACK TO 1967." Each guest room has its own flowery theme. *1665 Haight St. (at Belvedere St.).* ☎ *415/864-1978. www.redvic.com. 18 units (6 w/private bathroom). Doubles $84–$189. AE, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 6, 7, 43, 66, or 71. Muni: Carl & Cole. Map p 176.*

★★★ **The Ritz-Carlton** NOB HILL At this palatial property, modern features—flatscreen LCD TVs, 400-thread-count linens, Bulgari toiletries—don't detract from classic ones: regal decor, 18th-century antiques, a spa and fitness center, and the exceptional **Dining Room.** Above all, this 1909 landmark maintains excellent service. *600 Stockton St. (at California St.).*

The Mark Hopkins Hotel sits on the site of the former mansion (destroyed in the 1906 earthquake) of its namesake, a founder of the Southern Pacific Railroad.

☎ 800/241-3333 or 415/296-7465. www.ritzcarlton.com. 336 units. Doubles $289 & up. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Cable car: All. Map p 176.

Sir Francis Drake UNION SQUARE Despite the grandiose lobby and beefeater-clad doormen, stay here only if you get a great deal. The tiny rooms aren't as well maintained as the lobby. It's always a party, though, at 21st-floor **Harry Denton's Starlight Lounge** (p 191). *450 Powell St. (at Sutter St.). ☎ 415/392-7755. www.sirfrancisdrake.com. 417 units. Doubles $249–$429. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 2, 3, or 4. BART/Muni: Powell St. Cable car: Powell lines. Map p 176.*

★★ **Taj Campton Place** UNION SQUARE This Indian-owned hotel epitomizes refined opulence. Its eponymous Michelin-starred restaurant excels at presenting creative entrees worthy of savoring. Sumptuous guest rooms feature bathrooms with Portuguese limestone and deep soaking tubs. *340 Stockton St. (between Post & Sutter sts.). ☎ 415/781-5555. www.tajhotels.com. 110 units. Doubles $225 & up. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 2, 3, 4. BART/Muni: Montgomery St. Cable car: Powell lines. Map p 176.*

★★ **W San Francisco** SOMA This ultra-hip hotel adjacent to SFMOMA brings you sleek rooms, great views, 24-hour concierge service, free poolside yoga, Bliss Spa, the seasonally inspired **Trace restaurant,** and an active social scene. *181 3rd St. (at Howard St.). ☎ 415/777-5300. www.wsanfrancisco.com. 408 units. Doubles $269 & up. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 15, 30, or 45. BART/Muni: Montgomery St. Map p 176.*

★★ kids **Westin St. Francis** UNION SQUARE The historic grand dame of SF hotels couldn't be located better: It's right on Union Square. Whichever foreign flag hangs outside the hotel represents the nationality of a dignitary currently staying. *335 Powell St. (at Geary St.). ☎ 415/397-7000. www.westin.com. 1,195 units. Doubles $199 & up. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 2, 3, 4, 30, or 45. BART/Muni: Powell St. Cable car: Powell lines. Map p 176.*

Dining A to Z

★ **21st Amendment** SOMA *BREWPUB* Choose a beer flight or a glass, pair it with straightforward American eats, and if it's a game day, take the short walk to AT&T Park (p 194). *563 2nd St. ☎ 415/369-0900. Entrees $12–$21. AE, MC, V. Lunch & dinner daily. Streetcar: N or KT.*

★★ **25 Lusk** SOMA *NEW AMERICAN* Open since late 2010, this modern restaurant is notable for its design, robust wine program, and creative entrees. *25 Lusk St. (at Townsend St.). ☎ 415/495-5875. Entrees $24–$36. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Dinner Mon–Sat, lunch Sun. Bus: 8X, 30 or 47. Map p 176.*

★★ **A16** MARINA *ITALIAN* A chic crowd comes for wood-fired pizza and an exciting wine selection. *2355 Chestnut St. (between Scott & Divisadero sts.). ☎ 415/771-2216. Entrees $9–$25. AE, DC, MC, V. Lunch Wed–Fri; dinner daily. Bus: 30. Map p 176.*

★★★ **Acquerello** NOB HILL *ITALIAN* Amid the namesake watercolors in a former chapel, Michelin-starred fare shares space with a 600-wine list. *1722 Sacramento (between Van*

Ness & Polk). ☎ 415/567-5432. Prix-fixe menus (3–5 courses) $70–$135. AE, DC, MC, V. Dinner Tues–Sat. Dinner daily. Bus: 30.

★★ **Boogaloos** MISSION *LATIN* A much-loved brunch cafe with funky mosaic decor and a long wait. ***3296 22nd St. (at Valencia St.). ☎ 415/824-4088. Entrees $4.50–$10. DISC, MC, V. Breakfast & lunch daily. BART: 24th St. Mission Station. Map p 176.***

★★★ **Boulevard** SOMA *AMERICAN* Industrial Belle Epoque decor enhances a thoughtful menu of seasonal comfort food. ***1 Mission St. (at Steuart St.). ☎ 415/543-6084. Entrees $15–$40. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Lunch Mon–Fri; dinner daily. Bus: 12. BART/Muni: Embarcadero. Map p 176.***

Chez Panisse BERKELEY *CALIFORNIA* Alice Waters's famous restaurant presents an always-evolving menu that literally defines California cuisine (p 185). ***1517 Shattuck Ave. (between Cedar & Vine sts.). ☎ 510/548-5525. Entrees $60–$95 (prix fixe). AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Dinner Mon–Sat and cafe upstairs serves lunch & dinner menu Mon–Sat (reservations recommended for both). BART: Downtown Berkeley. Map p 176.***

Alice Waters, chef of the famous Chez Panisse restaurant, in her garden.

★★ **Cliff House** SUNSET *AMERICAN* Breathtaking ocean views and charming early-20th-century decor make the whole experience here—food is almost an afterthought. ***1090 Point Lobos Ave. (just west of 48th Ave. Geary Blvd. turns into Point Lobos Ave. after 43rd Ave.). ☎ 415/386-3330. Entrees $16–$28. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Breakfast, lunch & dinner daily. Bus: 18 or 38. Map p 176.***

★★ **Fifth Floor** SOMA *FRENCH* An acclaimed restaurant serving well-executed meals in a swanky space. Try to meet Emily Wines, one of the world's few female master sommeliers. ***12 4th St. (in the Hotel Palomar at Market St.). ☎ 415/348-1555. Entrees $24–$36. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Dinner Tues–Sat. Bus: 30 or 45. Map p 176.***

★★★ **Fleur de Lys** UNION SQUARE *FRENCH* This epitome of luxury dining is the city's most classic French affair. ***777 Sutter St. (between Jones & Taylor sts.). ☎ 415/673-7779. Prix-fixe from $70. AE, DC, MC, V. Dinner Tues–Sat. Bus: 2, 3, 4, or 27. Map p 176.***

★★ **Foreign Cinema** MISSION *CALIFORNIA/MEDITERRANEAN* It sounds like a strange pairing, but foreign films and inspired cuisine turn out to be a perfect match. For the full experience, request an outdoor table and order a cocktail off the creative list. ***2534 Mission St. (between 21st & 22nd sts.). ☎ 415/648-7600. Entrees $16–$30. AE, DISC, MC, V. Dinner daily; brunch Sat–Sun. Bus: 14 or 49. BART: 24th St. Map p 176.***

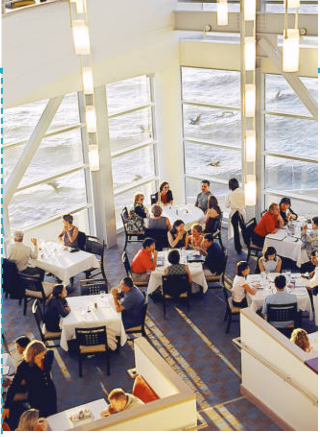
★ **Garden Court Restaurant** SOMA *AMERICAN* Elegant service in a lovely, historic setting. ***Palace Hotel, 2 New Montgomery St. (at Market St.). ☎ 415/546-5089. Entrees $12–$28. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Breakfast & lunch daily plus Sun brunch & Sat afternoon tea. BART/ Muni: Montgomery St. Map p 176.***

★★★ **Gary Danko** FISHERMAN'S WHARF *CALIFORNIA* This is SF's best restaurant, thanks to its flawless service, outstanding wines, and a chef who knows how to elevate cuisine to an art form. Reserve 4 weeks in advance or try your luck at the bar. ***800 N. Point St. (at Hyde St.). ☎ 415/749-2060. Prix-fixe menu (3–5 courses) from $71. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Dinner daily. Bus: 30 or 47. Cable car: Powell-Hyde. Map p 176.***

★ kids **Ghirardelli Soda Fountain & Chocolate Shop** FISHERMAN'S WHARF *ICE CREAM* The ever-present line attests to consistently great sundaes—all chocolate-topped, of course. ***Ghirardelli Sq., 900 N. Point St. (at Larkin St.). ☎ 415/474-3938. Desserts $5–$20. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Sun–Thurs 10am–11pm; Fri–Sat 10am–midnight. Bus: 10 or 30. Cable car: Powell-Hyde. Map p 176.***

★★ **Greens** MARINA *VEGETARIAN* Excellent flavors and stunning views (especially at night) impress even dedicated omnivores. ***Building A, Fort Mason Center (16 Marina Blvd. where Laguna St. turns into Marina Blvd.). ☎ 415/771-6222. Entrees $15–$24; Sat prix fixe $48. AE, DISC, MC, V. Lunch Tues–Sun; dinner daily. Bus: 28, 30. Map p 176.***

★ **Jardiniere** HAYES VALLEY *FRENCH* Symphony and opera patrons begin (or complete) a night at this upscale Civic Center staple. ***300 Grove St. (at Franklin St.). ☎ 415/861-5555. Entrees $29–$45. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Dinner daily. Bus: 21. Map p 176.***



The Cliff House is touristy but offers a spectacular view of the Pacific Ocean.

★★ **Kokkari** FINANCIAL DISTRICT *GREEK* Delicious Greek classics in a warm, upscale setting. ***200 Jackson St. (at Front St.). ☎ 415/981-0983. Entrees $15–$39. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Lunch Mon–Fri; dinner daily. Bus: 10 or 12. Streetcar: F. Map p 176.***

★★ **L'Osteria del Forno** NORTH BEACH *ITALIAN* An intimate dining room with a small, quintessentially Italian menu. ***519 Columbus Ave. (between Union & Green sts.). ☎ 415/982-1124. Entrees $5–$15. No credit cards. Lunch & dinner Wed–Mon. Bus: 15, 30, or 41. Cable car: Powell-Mason. Map p 176.***

★★★ **Mama's** NORTH BEACH *BREAKFAST/AMERICAN* Locals line up around the block for Mama's legendary brunch food, so arrive early. ***1701 Stockton St. (at Filbert). ☎ 415/362-6421. Entrees $8–$12. No credit cards. Breakfast & lunch 8am–3pm Tues–Sun. Bus: 12 or 30. Cable car: Powell-Mason. Map p 176.***

★★ **Mas Sake Freestyle Sushi** MARINA *JAPANESE/MEXICAN* If you're young, stylish, and appreciate attentive service and unique culinary creations and libations, this

I've written a song. Do you want to hear it?

Catch a flick with dinner at Foreign Cinema.

is your spot to see and be seen. *2030 Lombard St. (between Webster & Fillmore sts.).* ☎ *415/440-1505. Entrees less than $30. AE, DC, MC, V. Dinner daily. Bus: 22. Map p 176.*

★★★ **Michael Mina** FINANCIAL DISTRICT *CALIFORNIA* An elegant dining room with expert waitstaff, world-class sommeliers, and startlingly vibrant flavors. *252 California St. (between Front & Battery).* ☎ *415/397-9222. Prix-fixe lunch $49–$59; entrees for lunch $19–$21, dinner $34–$98. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Lunch Mon–Fri; dinner daily. Cable car: Powell line. Map p 176.*

Gary Danko won the James Beard Foundation's "Best New Restaurant" award in 2000. More than a decade later, it still lives up to its acclaim.

★★ **Millennium** UNION SQUARE *VEGETARIAN* Nothing at this upscale restaurant is made with animal products, and everything tastes amazing, proving that an ethical menu doesn't have to sacrifice taste. *580 Geary St. (at Jones St.).* ☎ *415/345-3900. Entrees $20–$24. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Dinner daily. Bus: 2, 3, 4, 27, or 38. Map p 176.*

★ **kids** **Mitchell's Ice Cream** MISSION *ICE CREAM* Try unexpected flavors like avocado, ginger, and sweet corn. *688 San Jose Ave. (at 29th St.).* ☎ *415/648-2300. $3–$6. No credit cards. Daily 11am–11pm. Bus: 14 or 49. Muni: Church & 30th St. Map p 176.*

★★ **One Market** SOMA *CALIFORNIA* Bradley Ogden's SF outlet, across from the Ferry Building, is meat-heavy and Michelin-starred. *1 Market St. (at Steuart St.).* ☎ *415/777-5577. Entrees $15–$33. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Lunch Mon–Fri; dinner Mon–Sat. BART/Muni: Embarcadero. Map p 176.*

California Cuisine

Chef Alice Waters is the mother of California cuisine. Waters owns Berkeley's Chez Panisse (p 182), consistently hailed as one of America's best restaurants. She revolutionized American food by championing the use of seasonal, local ingredients. Her culinary revelation came to her in France, where she lived next to a market street teeming with vendors selling fresh, high-quality produce.

That her grand vision came while she was overseas highlights California cuisine's multicultural, transnational character. It draws from the entire world, and, as such, is always evolving. While Waters was inspired by France's culinary tradition, other California chefs have drawn from Italy, the Middle East, Asia, and South America. But the thread that unites all California cuisine is this: a strong preference for uncomplicated dishes with superior ingredients that change with the seasons.

The Bay Area's location and immigrant history were central to the emergence of this epicurean style, as were the many family farms and ranches (many of them organic) surrounding San Francisco. Add the Pacific's bounty of fresh seafood, and you've got the perfect place in which to experience California cuisine.

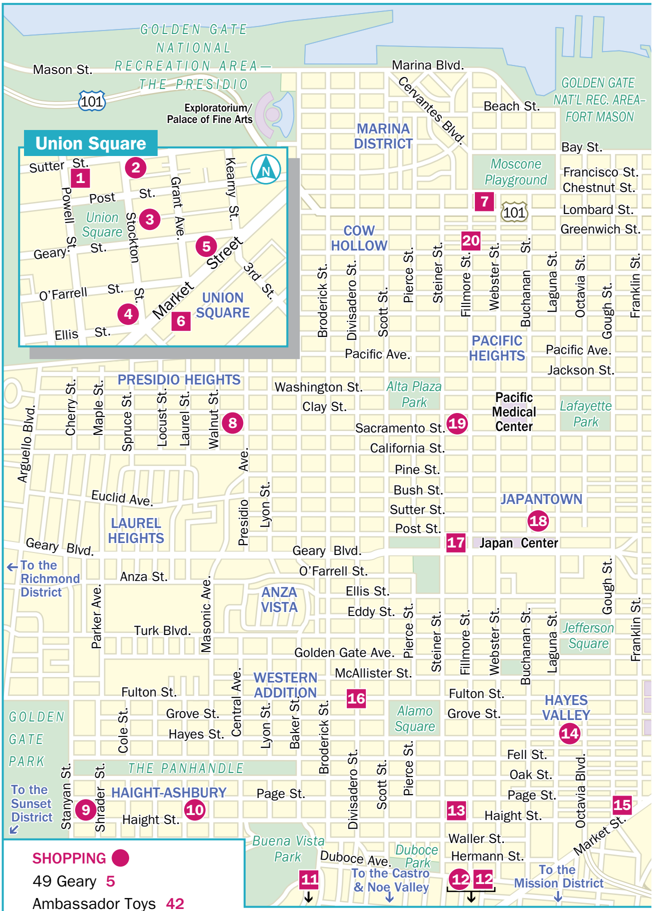
★ **Postrio** UNION SQUARE *CALIFORNIA* Wolfgang Puck's creation remains a lovely (and celebrity-studded) place to dine. ***545 Post St. (in the Prescott Hotel, between Taylor & Mason sts.). ☎ 415/776-7825. Entrees $16–$39. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Breakfast, lunch & dinner daily. Bus 2, 3, or 4. Map p 176.***

★★ **Quince** NORTH BEACH *ITALIAN* Seasonal dishes in an elegant, discreet setting. ***470 Pacific Ave. (at Montgomery St.). ☎ 415/775-8500. Prix fixe $95. AE, MC, V. Dinner daily. Bus: 12 or 30. Map p 176.***

★★★ **The Slanted Door** EMBARCADERO *VIETNAMESE* A perpetual crowd awaits Charles Phan's upscale Vietnamese cooking and his modern restaurant's Embarcadero view. Call ahead. ***1 Ferry Bldg. #3 (at the Embarcadero & Market St.). ☎ 415/861-8032. Entrees $11–$33. AE, MC, V. Lunch, afternoon tea & dinner daily. BART/Muni: Embarcadero. Map p 176.***

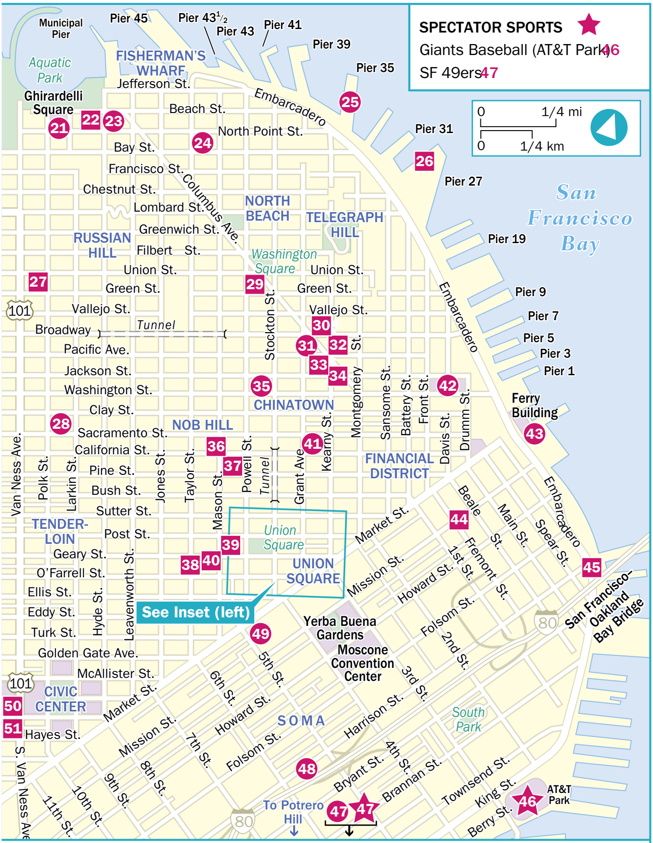
★★ kids **Tortilla Heights** PACIFIC HEIGHTS *MEXICAN* This lively outlet has whimsical decor that blends tropical and Moroccan influences, and chefs who put a fresh, flavorful spin on tacos, fajitas, and other Mexican favorites. Expect to see large, social groups ordering many margarita pitchers. ***1750 Divisadero Ave. (at Bush St.). ☎ 415/346-4531. Bus: 2, 24 or 38. Map p 176.***

San Francisco **Shopping, Nightlife & Arts**


GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA – THE PRESIDIO
Mason St.
101
Exploratorium/ Palace of Fine Arts
Marina Blvd.
Cervantes Blvd.
Beach St.
GOLDEN GATE NAT'L REC. AREA– FORT MASON
MARINA DISTRICT
Bay St.
Moscone Playground
Francisco St.
Chestnut St.
7
101
Lombard St.
Greenwich St.
COW HOLLOW
20
Union Square
Sutter St.
1
2
Post St.
Powell St.
Union Square
3
Stockton St.
Grant Ave.
Kearny St.
N
Geary St.
5
Street
3rd St.
O'Farrell St.
4
Market
6
UNION SQUARE
Ellis St.
Broderick St.
Divisadero St.
Scott St.
Pierce St.
Steiner St.
Fillmore St.
Webster St.
Buchanan St.
Laguna St.
Octavia St.
Gough St.
Franklin St.
Pacific Ave.
PACIFIC HEIGHTS
Pacific Ave.
Jackson St.
PRESIDIO HEIGHTS
Washington St.
Alta Plaza Park
Clay St.
Pacific Medical Center
Lafayette Park
Arguello Blvd.
Cherry St.
Maple St.
Spruce St.
Locust St.
Laurel St.
Walnut St.
8
Sacramento St.
19
California St.
Pine St.
Presidio Ave.
Bush St.
Euclid Ave.
Lyon St.
Sutter St.
JAPANTOWN
18
LAUREL HEIGHTS
Post St.
Geary Blvd.
17
Japan Center
Geary Blvd.
To the Richmond District
O'Farrell St.
Anza St.
ANZA VISTA
Ellis St.
Parker Ave.
Masonic Ave.
Eddy St.
Turk Blvd.
Pierce St.
Steiner St.
Fillmore St.
Webster St.
Buchanan St.
Laguna St.
Gough St.
Franklin St.
Jefferson Square
Golden Gate Ave.
McAllister St.
WESTERN ADDITION
16
Fulton St.
Fulton St.
Central Ave.
HAYES VALLEY
GOLDEN GATE PARK
Grove St.
Alamo Square
Grove St.
Cole St.
Hayes St.
Lyon St.
Baker St.
Broderick St.
14
Fell St.
Oak St.
THE PANHANDLE
Divisadero St.
Scott St.
Pierce St.
Stanyan St.
Shrader St.
Page St.
Page St.
Octavia Blvd.
To the Sunset District
HAIGHT-ASHBURY
9
10
Haight St.
13
Haight St.
15
Market St.
Waller St.
Buena Vista Park
Duboce Ave.
Duboce Park
Hermann St.
11
To the Castro & Noe Valley
12
12
To the Mission District

SHOPPING ●

49 Geary	5
Ambassador Toys	42
Amoeba Music	9
Apple Store San Francisco	4
Barnes & Noble	24
Canton Bazaar	41
Chinatown Kite Shop	18
City Lights Bookstore	31
Ferry Building Marketplace	43
Flight 001	14
Ghirardelli Square	21
Golden Gate Fortune Cookies Co.	35
Good Vibrations	12, 28
Maiden Lane	3
Nordstrom	49
Patagonia	23
Piedmont	10
Pumpkin	8
Rainbow Grocery	12
Ruby's Artist Coop.	25
SF Antique & Design Mall	47
SF Shopping Centre	49
Shabby Chic	19
Soko Hardware	18
Wilkes Bashford	2
Wine Club San Francisco	48


Municipal Pier
Pier 45
Pier 43½
Pier 43
Pier 41
Pier 39
Pier 35
Aquatic Park
FISHERMAN'S WHARF
Jefferson St.
Ghirardelli Square
Beach St.
Embarcadero
North Point St.
Bay St.
Francisco St.
Chestnut St.
Columbus Ave.
Lombard St.
NORTH BEACH
TELEGRAPH HILL
Greenwich St.
RUSSIAN HILL
Filbert St.
Washington Square
Union St.
Green St.
Vallejo St.
Tunnel
Broadway
Pacific Ave.
Jackson St.
Washington St.
Clay St.
Sacramento St.
California St.
Pine St.
Bush St.
Sutter St.
Post St.
Geary St.
O'Farrell St.
Ellis St.
Eddy St.
Turk St.
Golden Gate Ave.
McAllister St.
Hayes St.
Van Ness Ave.
S. Van Ness Ave.
Polk St.
Larkin St.
Hyde St.
Leavenworth St.
Jones St.
Taylor St.
Mason St.
Powell St.
Stockton St.
Grant Ave.
Kearny St.
Montgomery St.
Sansome St.
Battery St.
Front St.
Davis St.
Drumm St.
CHINATOWN
NOB HILL
TENDERLOIN
FINANCIAL DISTRICT
CIVIC CENTER
Union Square
UNION SQUARE
See Inset (left)
Yerba Buena Gardens
Moscone Convention Center
Market St.
Mission St.
Howard St.
Folsom St.
Harrison St.
Bryant St.
Brannan St.
Townsend St.
King St.
Berry St.
Beale St.
Main St.
Spear St.
Fremont St.
1st St.
2nd St.
3rd St.
4th St.
5th St.
6th St.
7th St.
8th St.
9th St.
10th St.
11th St.
SOMA
South Park
To Potrero Hill
AT&T Park
San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge
Ferry Building
Pier 31
Pier 27
Pier 19
Pier 9
Pier 7
Pier 5
Pier 3
Pier 1
San Francisco Bay
101
80
0 1/4 mi
0 1/4 km
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38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51

SPECTATOR SPORTS ★

Giants Baseball (AT&T Park)	46
SF 49ers	47

NIGHTLIFE & ARTS ■

Beach Blanket Babylon	29
Boom Boom Room	17
Buena Vista Café	22
Curran Theatre	40
Dalva	12
Elbo Room	12
Enrico's Sidewalk Café	30
Fly Bar	16
The Fillmore	17
Gordon Biersch	15
Greens Sports Bar	27
Harry Denton's Starlight Lounge	1
Hotel Biron	45
Laszlo	12
La Rondalla	12
Mad Dog in the Fog	13
Mas Sake	7
Matrix Fillmore	20
The Mint	12
Moby Dick	11
Press Club	6
Redwood Room	38
Ruby Skye	39
RN74	44
SF Brewing Co.	32
SF Opera	50
SF Symphony	51
Teatro Zinzanni	26
The Tonga Room & Hurricane Bar	37
The Top of the Mark	36
Tosca	34
Vesuvio	33

Shopping A to Z

Art

★★ **49 Geary Street** UNION SQUARE You'll find several top galleries here. *49 Geary St. (between Grant Ave. & Kearny St.). Most galleries closed Sun–Mon. Bus: 16, 17, or 50. Streetcar: F. BART/Muni: Powell St. Map p 186.*

Books

★ **kids** **Chronicle Books** UNION SQUARE & SOMA Since 1967, this publisher has been known for innovative design and whimsical gift creations. *165 Fourth St. ☎ 415/369-6271. 1846 Union St. ☎ 415/345-8435. 680 Second St. ☎ 415/537-4200. www.chroniclebooks.com. AE, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 27 or 30. Map p 186.*

★★ **City Lights** NORTH BEACH Founded by Beat poet and publisher Lawrence Ferlinghetti in 1953, this landmark shop still stocks avant-garde and alternative lit. *261 Columbus Ave. (at Broadway St.). ☎ 415/362-8193. www.citylights.com. AE, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 15, 30, or 41. Map p 186.*

An SF institution, City Lights contains an impressive selection of art, poetry, and political books.

Poetry Room
Upstairs
Beat Literature
Upstairs
Fiction
Guardian

★★ **Kinokuniya** JAPANTOWN Even if you don't speak Japanese, this shopping complex fascinates with its foreign selections of books, gifts, tees, and trinkets. *1581 Webster St. (between Geary Blvd. & Post St.) ☎ 415/567-7625. www.kinokuniya.com. MC, V. Bus: 1 or 5. Map p 186.*

Department Store

★ **Nordstrom** UNION SQUARE Nordstrom offers high-quality clothing, an excellent shoe department, and the best customer service in the industry. *865 Market St. (at 5th St.). ☎ 415/243-8500. www.nordstrom.com. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 27, 30, 38, or 45. Streetcar: F. Map p 186.*

Electronics

★★ **Apple Store** UNION SQUARE This beautiful store houses the trendiest of e-gear. When Steve Jobs died, it became a shrine to his life and work. *1 Stockton St. (at Market St.). ☎ 415/392-0202. www.apple.com. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 30, 38, or 45. Streetcar: F. Map p 186.*

Fashion

★★ **Maiden Lane** UNION SQUARE Top designers like Marc Jacobs have boutiques on this chic pedestrian alley. Louis Vuitton, Kate Spade, and others are nearby. *Maiden Lane, off Stockton St. Bus: 30, 38, or 45. Map p 186.*

★ **Patagonia** FISHERMAN'S WHARF This high-quality outfitter's outerwear is a staple in locals' wardrobes. *770 N. Point St. (between Hyde & Leavenworth sts.). ☎ 415/771-2050. www.patagonia.com. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 10, 30, or 47. Cable car: Powell-Hyde. Map p 186.*

★ **Piedmont** HAIGHT Absolutely outrageous vintage women's garments—sold mostly to men. The giant fishnet legs over the entrance epitomize the Haight. *1452 Haight St. (at Ashbury). ☎ 415/864-8075. www.piedmontsf.com. AE, MC, V. Bus: 21. Map p 186.*

★★★ **Wilkes Bashford** UNION SQUARE SF's best-known men's clothing store, selling fine European fashions. *375 Sutter St. (at Stockton St.). ☎ 415/986-4380. www.wilkesbashford.com. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 2, 3, 4, 30, or 45. Map p 186.*

Gifts & Souvenirs

★★ **Canton Bazaar** CHINATOWN This center carries Chinese porcelain, jade, antiques, and hand-carved furniture. *616 Grant Ave. (between California & Sacramento sts.). ☎ 415/362-5750. AE, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 1, 15, 30, or 45. Map p 186.*

Good Vibrations MISSION & NOB HILL The first and best pro-woman erotic shop. If you're not shy, the employees give great advice. *www.goodvibes.com. 603 Valencia St. (at 17th St.). ☎ 415/522-5460. Bus: 22 or 26. Bart to 16th St. 1620 Polk St. (at Sacramento St.). ☎ 415/345-0400. Bus: 1 or 19. Cable car: California line. AE, DISC, MC, V. Map p 186.*

Housewares & Furnishings

★ **Soko Hardware** JAPANTOWN A great selection of ceramic plates, tea sets, sake cups, and more at bargain prices. *1698 Post St. (at Buchanan St.). ☎ 415/931-5510. MC, V. Bus: 2, 3, 4, 38. Map p 186.*

Jewelry

★★ **Ruby's Artist Cooperative** MISSION Local jewelers' one-of-a-kind creations. *3602 20th St. (at Valencia St.). ☎ 415/550-8052. www.rubygallery.com. MC, V. Bus: 12 or 27. Streetcar: J. BART to 16th or 24th St. Map p 186.*

Music

★★ **Amoeba** HAIGHT The planet's biggest and best independent music store has listening booths and frequent free live performances. Ask staffers for advice—but only about something adequately obscure. *1855 Haight St. (between Shrader & Stanyan sts.). ☎ 415/831-1200. www.amoeba.com. DISC, MC, V. Bus: 6, 7, 66, or 71. Map p 186.*

Shopping Centers

★ **San Francisco Antique & Design Mall** POTRERO HILL More than 200 antiques specialists congregate in a huge design-district warehouse. *248 Utah St. ☎ 415/656-3530. www.sfantique.com. AE, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 9. Map p 186.*

San Francisco Shopping Centre SOMA Anchored by Nordstrom and Bloomingdale's, this attractive mall also houses chains like Kenneth Cole, Calvin Klein, and Hugo Boss. And its food court has got to be one of the world's best. *865 Market St. (at 5th St.). ☎ 415/495-5656. www.westfield.com/sanfrancisco. Bus: 27, 30, 38, or 45. Streetcar: F. Map p 186.*

★★★ **Ferry Building Marketplace** FINANCIAL DISTRICT This is foodie heaven: All sorts of culinary shops and mini-restaurants tempt with taste. Don't miss Cowgirl Creamery's Artisan Cheese Shop, Scharffen Berger Chocolates, or Miette, a delightfully quirky pastry shop. Go on Saturday, Tuesday, or

See how your fortune is made at the Golden Gate Fortune Cookies Factory.

Thursday, when the impressive farmers' market takes center stage. ***1 Ferry Building (at the Embarcadero and Market St.). ☎ 415/983-8000. www.ferrybuildingmarketplace.com. Streetcar: F. Map p 186.***

★★ kids Ghirardelli Square FISHERMAN'S WHARF A former chocolate factory offers a priceless view and charming shops. Ghirardelli's flagship store (p 183) is here, so don't forego a sundae. ***900 N. Point St. (at Larkin St.). ☎ 415/775-5500. www.ghirardellisq.com. Bus: 30 or 47. Cable car: Powell-Hyde. Streetcar: F. Map p 186.***

Specialty Foods & Wines

For Ghirardelli chocolate and the Ferry Building Farmers' Market, see above.

★★ kids Golden Gate Fortune Cookies Factory CHINATOWN Buy fortune cookies hot off the press at this tiny Chinatown shop in an alley. Bring your own message to watch it get folded in. ***56 Ross Alley (between Washington & Jackson sts.). ☎ 415/781-3956. No credit cards. Bus: 8X, 10, 12, 30, or 45. Cable car: Powell-Mason. Map p 186.***

★★ Rainbow Grocery MISSION A huge health-food co-op where you can browse through virtually any kind of health food that exists, plus a mind-boggling selection of bulk spices and teas. ***1745 Folsom St. (at 13th St.). ☎ 415/863-0620. www.rainbow.coop. AE, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 12 or 47. Map p 186.***

Wine Club San Francisco SOMA The West's largest wine merchant, surprisingly affordable. ***953 Harrison St. (between 5th & 6th sts.). ☎ 415/512-9086. www.thewineclub.com. AE, MC, V. Bus: 12, 19, or 27. Map p 186.***

Shop for modern travel accessories at Flight 001, one of the many cute shops on Hayes St.

Toys

★ kids **Ambassador Toys** FINANCIAL DISTRICT European dolls, wooden toys, and clever games are among the whimsical playthings sold here. *2 Embarcadero Center (at Sacramento St., between Front & Davis sts.). ☎ 415/345-8697. AE, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 1. Cable car: California line. Streetcar: F. Map p 186.*

Travel Goods

Flight 001 HAYES VALLEY Shop for hip travel accessories like sleek luggage, "security-friendly" manicure sets, and other midair must-haves. *525 Hayes St. (between Laguna & Octavia sts.). ☎ 415/487-1001. www.flight001.com. AE, DISC, MC, V. Bus: 21, 47, or 49. Map p 186.*

Nightlife & Arts A to Z

Bars, Lounges, Pubs & Clubs

★★★ **The Alembic** THE HAIGHT Daniel Hyatt's seriously good cocktails take Haight Street out of the past and into the present. Bar snacks range from lamb sliders to bone marrow. *1725 Haight St. (btw. Cole and Shrader sts.). ☎ 415/666-0822. Bus: 33, 43, 71. Map p 186.*

★★ **The Boom Boom Room** WESTERN ADDITION A dark, steamy joint that hosts some of America's best blues bands. *1601 Fillmore St. (at Geary Blvd.). ☎ 415/673-8000. Cover free–$22 (many shows just $5). Bus: 22 or 38. Map p 186.*

★★★ **Bourbon & Branch** UNION SQUARE You need a password to get into this 1920s-themed speakeasy: Say "books" and you'll be led through a pivoting bookcase to the crowded back-room library. Reserve at least 2 weeks in advance for a seated spot. The talented barmen here concoct SF's best cocktails. Try the cucumber gimlet or anything with whiskey in it. *501 Jones Street (at O'Farrell St.). ☎ 415/346-1735. Bus: 8X, 30. Map p 186.*

★ **The Buena Vista** FISHERMAN'S WHARF It's served more Irish coffees than any other bar in the world. A historic SF tradition. *2765 Hyde St. (at Beach St.). ☎ 415/474-5044. Bus: 30 or 47. Map p 186.*

★★ **Dalva** MISSION A dark, intimate cocktail lounge with an eclectic crowd and excellent sangria. *3121 16th St. (between Valencia and Albion sts.). ☎ 415/252-7740. Bus: 26 or 49. BART: 16th St. (before dark). Map p 186.*

★★ **Elbo Room** MISSION Socialize at the inviting bar or head upstairs for live music (separate cover up to $10). *647 Valencia St. (between Clarion Alley and Sycamore St.). ☎ 415/552-7788. Bus: 26 or 49. BART: 16th St. (before dark). Map p 186.*

★★ **Fly Bar** NORTH OF THE PANHANDLE A neighborhood lounge with soju and sake drinks, great pizzas, and rotating art. *762 Divisadero St. (at Fulton St.). ☎ 415/931-4359. Bus: 5, 21, 22, or 24. Map p 186.*

★ **Greens Sports Bar** RUSSIAN HILL SF's best sports bar boasts 15 TVs and 18 on-tap beers. *2239 Polk St. (at Green St.). ☎ 415/775-4287. Bus: 19, 47, or 49. Cable car: Powell-Hyde. Map p 186.*

★ **Harry Denton's Starlight Room** UNION SQUARE A 1930s-style gathering place with dancing, stellar views, a long appetizer menu, and, on weekends, an orchestra. *Sir Francis Drake Hotel, 450 Powell St. (between Sutter & Post sts.), 21st floor.* ☎ *415/395-8595. Cover varies; call ahead. Bus: 2, 3, or 4. Cable car: Powell-Hyde, Powell-Mason. Map p 186.*

Hotel Biron HAYES VALLEY This gem of a wine bar is tucked away in an alley right behind Market Street. In addition to their well-edited wine menu, there's an appetizing selection of cheeses. Open daily until 2am. *45 Rose St. (at Gough).* ☎ *415/703-0403. Bus: 6, 49, 71. Streetcar: F, J, K, M, or N. Map p 186.*

★★ **Laszlo** MISSION An industrial-chic bar that serves funky drinks. *2526 Mission St. (between 21st & 22nd sts.).* ☎ *415/401-0810. Bus: 14 or 49. BART to 24th St. Map p 186.*

Mad Dog in the Fog HAIGHT Catch European soccer games at this quirky British pub. *530 Haight St. (between Steiner & Fillmore sts.).* ☎ *415/626-7279. Bus: 22 or 67. Map p 186.*

Matrix Fillmore COW HOLLOW The swanky pulse of SF's singles' scene stays open until 2am daily. *3138 Fillmore St. (between Greenwich & Filbert sts.).* ☎ *415/563-4180. Bus: 22, 30, or 45. Map p 186.*

Daniel Hyatt pours you a cocktail at the Alembic, on Haight Street.

★ **The Mint Karaoke Lounge** MISSION This once-gay song spot now draws patrons of all orientations, who, after a potent cocktail, take to the stage. *1942 Market St. (between Guerrero St. & Duboce Ave.).* ☎ *415/626-4726. No cover, but a 2-drink minimum. Drinks $4.75–$10. Bus: 6, 22, or 71. Streetcar: F, J, K, M, N. Map p 186.*

★ **Moby Dick** CASTRO This gay bar is a 30-year-old Castro institution. *4049 18th St. (between Castro & Noe sts.).* ☎ *415/861-1199. Bus: 22 or 33. Streetcar: F, J, K, or M. Map p 186.*

★ **Press Club** SOMA A sleek wine lounge popular with the after-work crowd that also serves tasty small bites. *20 Yerba Buena Lane (at Market St. between 3rd & 4th sts.).* ☎ *415/744-5000. Muni: F. BART: Powell. Map p 186.*

★ **Redwood Room** UNION SQUARE The Clift Hotel's historic lounge epitomizes SF glitz. *Clift Hotel, 495 Geary St. (at Taylor St.).* ☎ *415/929-2372. Bus: 2, 3, 4, 27, or 38. Map p 186.*

★★ **RN74** SOMA Michael Mina's wine bar for Francophiles. *301 Mission St. (at Beale St.).* ☎ *415/543-7474. Muni: F. BART: Embarcadero. Map p 186.*

Ruby Skye UNION SQUARE A former Victorian movie house is now SF's biggest dance club. *420 Mason St. (between Post & Geary sts.).* ☎ *415/693-0777. Cover free–$35. Bus: 2, 3, 4, 27, or 38. Map p 186.*

★ **The Tonga Room & Hurricane Bar** NOB HILL Umbrella drinks and faux thunderstorms evoke a fun tropical vibe. During happy hour (Wed–Fri 5–7pm), it's

$10 for all you can eat. *Fairmont Hotel, 950 Mason St. (at California St.).* ☎ *415/772-5278. Bus: 1. Cable car: All. Map p 186.*

★★★ **The Top of the Mark** NOB HILL A historic venue with SF's best view and a 100-martini menu. Occasional live entertainment. *InterContinental Mark Hopkins, 1 Nob Hill (at Mason & California sts.), 19th floor.* ☎ *415/616-6916. Cover $5–$15 (Wed–Sun). Bus: 1. Cable car: All. Map p 186.*

★★ **Tosca** NORTH BEACH This traditional old North Beach institution draws local politicos and celebs. With a dark-wood bar and a jukebox playing only opera, it's a classic. *242 Columbus Ave. (between Broadway St. & Pacific Ave.).* ☎ *415/986-9651. Bus: 12, 15, 41. Map p 186.*

★ **Vesuvio** NORTH BEACH Once the favored beatnik watering hole, this famous place still draws an artsy crowd. *255 Columbus Ave. (at Jack Kerouac Alley, between Broadway St. & Pacific Ave.).* ☎ *415/362-3370. Bus: 12, 15, 41. Map p 186.*

Live Entertainment

★★★ **Beach Blanket Babylon** NORTH BEACH For almost 40 years, BBB's outrageously hatted comedians have sung, danced, and spoofed pop culture. A hilarious, must-see revue. *Club Fugazi, 678 Green St. (at Columbus Ave.).* ☎ *415/421-4222. Tickets $25–$130. Bus: 30, 45. Cable car: Powell-Mason. Map p 186.*

★★ **SHN Curran Theatre** UNION SQUARE & CIVIC CENTER This beautiful venue was established in 1922. Along with the ★ **Orpheum Theater** *(1192 Market St.)* and the **Golden Gate Theater** *(1 Taylor St.),* its "Best of Broadway" series brings NYC's biggest hits to SF. *445 Geary St. (between Mason & Taylor sts.).* ☎ *888/746-1799. Tickets $31–$200. Bus: 2, 3, 4, or 38. BART/Muni: Powell St. Map p 186.*

★★★ **The Fillmore** WESTERN ADDITION The venue that presented bands like the Grateful Dead and Jefferson Airplane remains SF's best rock venue. *1805 Geary Blvd. (at Fillmore St.).* ☎ *415/346-6000. Tickets $20–$50. Bus: 22 or 38. Map p 186.*

★★ **Palace of Fine Arts Theatre** MARINA This inviting venue presents a world of cultural performances, from Persian classical music to obscure forms of ethnic dance, as well as thought-provoking lectures and events. *3301 Lyon St. (at Richardson Ave./Lombard St.).* ☎ *415/563-6504 or 567-6642. Tickets $20–$65. Bus: 30. Map p 186.*

★★ **San Francisco Opera** CIVIC CENTER North America's second-largest opera company (second only to the Met) is outstanding. ***Tip:*** $10 standing-room tickets are sold on the day of the show (cash only; one per person). The season runs from September to December and June to July. The top-notch San Francisco Ballet also performs here. *War Memorial Opera House, 301 Van Ness Ave. (at Grove St.).* ☎ *415/864-3330. Tickets $25–$330. Bus: 5, 21, 47, or 49. BART/Muni: Civic Center. Map p 186.*

★★ **San Francisco Symphony** CIVIC CENTER Founded in 1911 and conducted by internationally acclaimed Michael Tilson Thomas. *Davies Symphony Hall, 201 Van Ness Ave. (between Grove & Hayes sts.).* ☎ *415/864-6000. Tickets $15–$145. Bus: 5, 21, 47, or 49. BART/Muni: Civic Center. Map p 186.*

SFJAZZ Center HAYES VALLEY Though its grand opening was set for MLK Day in January 2013—after press time for this book—there was

The Castro is San Francisco's historic gayborhood—and don't miss the classic Castro Theater.

lots of buzz about this eco-friendly 35,000-square-foot performance space. Rumors swirled, too, about who the big-name chef would be at the signature restaurant. Go see for yourself, and we'll update this space in the next edition. ***205 Franklin St. (at Fell St.). ☎ 866/920-5299. Muni: F, J, 6, 47, or 49. BART: Civic Center. Map p 186.***

★★ **Teatro Zinzanni** EMBARCADERO Circus artists, lively musicians, and a five-course meal come together for a 3-hour extravaganza under a distinctive tent. Tagline: "Love, chaos, and dinner." ***Broadway & Embarcadero. ☎ 415/438-2668. Tickets $100–$165 (3-course brunch starts at $73). Bus: 8X. Streetcar: F. Map p 186.***

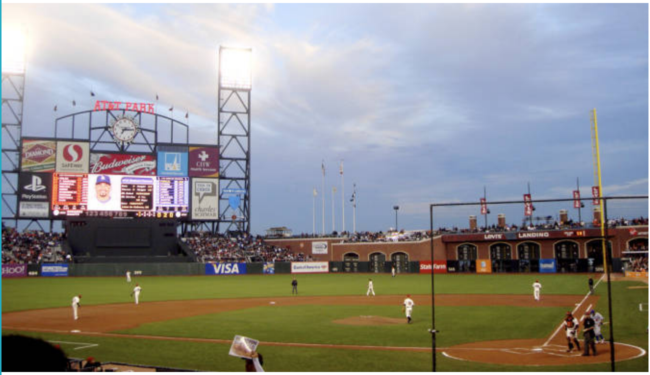
Spectator Sports

★★★ kids Giants Baseball

SOMA AT&T Park is often called the world's best baseball stadium. It's got dramatic bay views, splashy home runs, lots of stuff for kids, excellent food (order the garlic fries!), and a highly entertaining team and fan base, both of whom are still giddy from their 2010 World Series win and their 2012 perfect game. ***24 Willie Mays Plaza (King & 2nd sts.). ☎ 415/972-2000. Tickets $8–$275. Bus: 10, 30, or 45. Streetcar: K, N, or T. Map p 186.***

San Francisco 49ers CANDLESTICK POINT SF's pro football team. Because there are so many season-ticket holders, single tickets are hard to come by. Check Ticketmaster or Craigslist. And bring a windbreaker. ***Candlestick Park, 490 Jamestown Ave. ☎ 415/656-4900 or 877/49-49ERS. Tickets $59–$94. Map p 186.*** ●

Go to a game at AT&T Park and enjoy a panoramic view of the Bay.



The
Savvy Traveler

Before You Go

Tourist Offices

Napa Valley Destination Council, at the Napa Valley Welcome Center, 600 Main St., Napa (☎ 707/251-5895; www.legendarynapavalley.com).

Yountville Chamber of Commerce, 6484 Washington St. (☎ 707/944-0904; www.yountville.com).

Santa Rosa Convention & Visitors' Bureau, 9 4th St., Santa Rosa (☎ 800/404-7673 or 707/577-8674; www.visitsantarosa.com).

Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau, 217 Healdsburg Ave., Healdsburg (☎ 707/433-6935; www.healdsburg.com).

Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau, 453 1st St. E., Sonoma (☎ 707/996-1090; www.sonomavalley.com).

Sonoma County Tourism Bureau, (☎ 800/576-6662; www.sonomacounty.com).

When to Go

Wine country's beauty is striking at any time of year, but it's most memorable during the **September** and **October** harvest months, when wineries are in full gear and the landscape is swept with rich autumnal colors. **Spring** is also gorgeous, in part because that's when the mustard flowers bloom, and there'll be less traffic, thinner crowds, and better deals than in the fall. Though **winter** boasts the best rates and fewest people, there's a reason: The days are often chilly and rainy and miles of bare vines lay dormant. The **summer** months bring hot weather and lots of traffic.

Weather

Though the valleys claim a year-round average of 70°F (21°C), if you come with a suitcase packed with T-shirts and shorts during the winter holiday season, you're likely to shiver your way to the nearest department store to stock up on warm clothes and possibly an umbrella. In summer, if you rent a car without air-conditioning, you're liable to want to stop at every swimming pool you pass. And don't let that morning fog and those early cool temperatures fool you—on most days, come noon, the hot sun sends down plenty of rays. Dress in layers and remember that temperatures can drop dramatically at night.

Festivals & Special Events

SPRING: A favorite Sonoma Valley festival is the **Barrel Tasting Weekend,** held in early March. The event, which gives the public a glimpse of Sonoma Valley's finest future releases and features more than 100 wineries, is a celebration that includes demonstrations, pairings, hors d'oeuvres—and all the world-class wine you can drink. Tickets are about $30; buy them in advance (or pay $40 at the door). ☎ *800/723-6336. www.wineroad.com*.

Early April brings the **Sonoma Valley Film Festival,** a 5-day extravaganza screening more than 75 new independent films, including features, documentaries, and shorts. Day passes are $75 each, and basic passes to the whole festival are $175 each (two for $320), but patrons can buy travel packages costing upward of $3,600. ☎ *707/933-2600. www.sonomafilmfest.org*.

Previous page: Avoid drinking and driving—take a balloon (see p 60).

AVERAGE SEASONAL TEMPERATURES IN WINE COUNTRY

	SPRING (MAR–MAY)	SUMMER (JUNE–AUG)	FALL (SEPT–NOV)	WINTER (DEC–FEB)
Average highs (in °F)	78	92	85	72
Average highs (in °C)	26	33	29	22
Average lows (in °F)	64	81	74	61
Average lows (in °C)	18	27	23	16

AVERAGE MONTHLY TEMPERATURES IN SAN FRANCISCO

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
High °F/°C	56/13	59/15	60/16	61/16	63/17	64/18	64/18	65/18	69/21	68/20	63/17	57/14
Low °F/°C	46/8	48/19	49/9	49/9	51/11	53/12	53/12	54/12	56/13	55/13	52/11	47/8

In late April, the annual **Vineyard to Vintner (V2V)** day includes seminars, blind tastings, and open houses at many wineries. In the evening, Stags' Leap Winery hosts barrel tastings on its Manor House porch, and live music. It's $345 for the whole day, including a fancy soiree, $145 for the open houses only. ☎ *707/255-1720. www.stagsleapdistrict.com.*

Santa Rosa's **Cinco de Mayo Parade & Festival** happens the first weekend of May. It's the valley's largest celebration and features authentic Mexican culture at its best: mariachis in traditional costumes, ballet folklorico, Aztec dancers, Afro-Brazilian flamenco, and lots of live music and food. Admission is free. ☎ *707/548-3475. www.santarosacincodemayo.com.*

SUMMER: The **Napa Valley Wine Auction,** held each June, is the area's most renowned—and exclusive—event. The annual charity affair brings some 2,000 deep-pocketed wine aficionados to Napa Valley to schmooze and spend serious cash. Four-day tickets are $2,500 per person, and they sell out every year. (Less extravagant options are available for $350 and up.) ☎ *707/963-3388. www.auctionnapavalley.org.*

Another big June attraction is the 10-day **Healdsburg Jazz Festival.** Venues range from vineyards to restaurants to intimate theaters, and headliners sell out quickly. Admission prices vary, and tickets are available via the website or at the box office. ☎ *707/433-4633. www.healdsburgjazzfestival.org.*

Summer is also time for the **Sonoma County Hot-Air Balloon Classic,** with a 30-balloon launch, tethered rides, and cartoon-character-shaped dirigibles. *www.schabc.org.*

In August, Santa Rosa holds **Wings Over Wine Country,** a thrilling air show with daredevil stunts and offering a close-up look at all types of aircraft. Advance tickets cost $30 for adults, $5 for kids. ☎ *707/566-8380. www.wingsoverwinecountry.org.*

AUTUMN: Fall into the romance of the **Napa Sonoma Wine Country Film Festival,** a monthlong celebration of cinema, cuisine, and wine. Open-air venues screen flicks while film buffs sip, nibble, and socialize. Other activities include symposia, celebrity receptions, and chef demos.

Tickets cost $10 to $25 per movie. ☎ *707/935-3456. www.sriff.org.*

The annual **Harvest Fair** takes place in Sonoma County every September. Residents and travelers come to check out the extensive art show and more than 150 wineries and various microbreweries represented, cooking demos, music bands, the grape-stomping world championship, and a lively marketplace of foods and crafts. Kids enjoy farm animals, beekeepers, and wagon rides. ☎ *707/545-4203. www.harvestfair.org.*

Another major Sonoma event is the **Vintage Festival,** held the last weekend in September in Sonoma's historic plaza. This is a real party, complete with live music, dancing, parades, art displays, and, of course, copious wine tasting. ☎ *707/996-2109. www.sonomavinfest.org.*

WINTER: February heralds the **Sonoma Valley Olive Season Finale Weekend,** a celebration of the ancient fruit. At this culmination of the region's 3-month olive season, activities range from artisan markets to gourmet cooking classes to spa treatments. You could start early in January by taking the Wine Trail for access to 17 wineries' special tastings, or hold out for the VinOlivo February event series that includes 60 wineries and 25 restaurants. ☎ *866/996-1090. www.sonomavalley.com/olivefestival.*

The mustard blossoms that speckle the valley inspired the **Napa Valley Mustard Festival** and its **Taste of Yountville,** both in late winter, but the events extend beyond the tiny seed to showcase the Napa's renowned chefs and vintners. ☎ *707/944-0904. www.mustardfestival.org.*

Right before heavy tourist season kicks off, Healdsburg holds the **Winter Wineland** barrel-tasting weekend at more than 140 wineries along the **Russian River Wine Road.** If you fall in love with a wine you've sampled, secure your share of bottles—at discounted prices—long before they hit the stores, never mind sell out. (It's called buying futures.) $35 for advance 1-day tickets, $45 for the weekend ($10 more at the door). ☎ *800/723-6336. www.wineroad.com.*

Useful Websites

- **www.legendarynapavalley.com**
- **www.napachamber.com**
- **www.napadowntown.com**
- **www.napavalleyreservations.com**
- **www.napavintners.com**
- **www.silveradotrail.com**
- **www.sonomavalley.com**
- **www.sonoma.com**
- **www.sonomavalleywine.com**
- **www.staysonoma.com**
- **www.winecountry.com**

Cellphones (Mobiles)

One good wireless rental company is **InTouch USA** (☎ 800/872-7626). Though Napa and Sonoma don't have stores that rent cellphones, sometimes hotels' business centers, like the one at **Vintners Inn** (☎ 707/575-7350), will. A store in downtown San Francisco: **Triptel Mobile Rental Phones** (☎ 415/474-3330; 1525 Van Ness Ave., between California and Pine sts.) rents cellphones for $3 per day, or $15 per week. Airtime rates are 65¢ per minute for domestic calls, with an additional $2.50 per minute for international calls. Triptel also sells SIM cards for foreign travelers bringing their own phones. International travelers will be happy to know that cellphones (mobiles) with triband GSM capabilities work in the U.S. Remember that you'll be charged for calls received on a U.K. mobile used abroad. U.K. visitors can rent a U.S. phone before leaving home. Contact **Cellhire** (☎ 0800 2800 415 from the U.K., or 020/ 7490-7799; www.cellhire.co.uk).

Car Rentals

When booking rental cars online, the best deals are usually on rental-car company websites. Major car-rental companies operating in wine country include **Enterprise** (☎ 800/ 325-8007 or 707/253-8000; www.enterprise.com); **Budget** (☎ 800/527-0700 or 707/224-7846; www.budget.com); and **Hertz** (800/654-3131 or 707/265-7575; www.hertz.com). U.K. visitors should check **Holiday Autos** (www.holidayautos.co.uk). San Francisco International Airport (SFO) and Oakland International Airport (OAK) both have car-rental centers at which the above companies are represented, in addition to discount car-rental companies such as **Fox Rent a Car** (airport location only; ☎ 800/225-4369 or 855/849-4204; www.foxrentacar.com). Rates vary depending on season and other factors, but generally, compact cars run about $200 to $350 per week, including taxes and other charges. Most rentals in the U.S. are automatics.

Getting There

By Plane

Wine country is easily accessed by the Bay Area's two major airports: San Francisco International (SFO) and Oakland International (OAK), across the Bay Bridge. **San Francisco International Airport** (☎ 650/821-8211; www.flysfo.com) is a 2-hour drive from wine country. **Oakland International Airport** (☎ 510/577-4000; www.oaklandairport.com) is less crowded than SFO and more accessible, but offers fewer carriers. It's a bit more than a 1-hour drive from downtown Napa.

Getting to & from the Airport

Rent a car and drive to wine country (see "Car Rentals," above, for companies, and "By Car," below, for driving directions). Because there's no useful public transportation in either valley, it's almost impossible to explore the region without wheels, so you might as well rent right at the airport. If you need to, though, for $29 (one-way, cash only), you can ride to many hotels in Napa Valley or Sonoma from SFO with **Evans Transportation** (☎ 707/255-1559). **Sonoma County Airport Express** (☎ 707/ 837-8700) offers service from SFO to a few hotels and major hubs in Sonoma (one-way $34 for adults; $32 for seniors 62+, military and students; free for children 12 and younger).

By Car

All these routes to wine country are well marked.

To Napa Valley

FROM SAN FRANCISCO Cross the Golden Gate Bridge and go north on U.S. 101; turn east on Hwy. 37 (toward Vallejo), then north on Hwy. 29, the main road through Napa Valley. You can also take Hwy. 121/12 from Hwy. 37 and follow the signs.

FROM OAKLAND Head eastbound on I-80 toward Sacramento; a few miles past the Carquinez Bridge ($5 toll) and the city of Vallejo, exit on Hwy. 12 west, which, after a few miles, intersects with

Hwy. 29 and leads directly into Napa.

To Sonoma Valley

FROM SAN FRANCISCO Cross the Golden Gate Bridge and stay on U.S. 101 N. Exit at Hwy. 37; after 10 miles, turn north onto Hwy. 121. After another 10 miles, turn north onto Hwy. 12 (Broadway), which takes you directly into the town of Sonoma.

FROM OAKLAND Head eastbound on I-80 toward Sacramento. A few miles past the city of Vallejo (and after paying a $5 toll to cross the Carquinez Bridge), exit on Hwy. 12, which, after a few miles, intersects with Hwy. 29 at the south end of Napa Valley. Just before entering the town of Napa, you'll come to a major intersection, where Hwy. 29 meets Hwy. 12/121. Turn left onto Hwy. 12/121, which takes you directly into Sonoma Valley.

To Northern Sonoma

FROM SAN FRANCISCO Cross the Golden Gate Bridge and stay on U.S. 101 north. Exit anywhere from Santa Rosa to Healdsburg, depending on your destination.

FROM OAKLAND Head eastbound on I-80 toward Sacramento. A few miles past the city of Vallejo (and after paying a $5 toll to cross the Carquinez Bridge), exit on Hwy. 12, which, after a few miles, intersects with Hwy. 29 at the south end of Napa Valley. Just before entering the town of Napa, you'll come to a major intersection, where Hwy. 29 meets Hwy. 12/121. Turn left onto Hwy. 12/121, then turn right onto California 116/Arnold Drive. When the road forks, veer right onto Adobe Road. Turn left on East Washington Street, merge onto U.S. 101 N., and exit at the town of your choice.

By Train & Bus

Amtrak (☎ 800/872-7245 or 800/USA-RAIL; www.amtrak.com) doesn't stop in Sonoma, but maintains two stops in Napa. One is at the Napa Wine Train stop (1275 McKinstry St.), and the other is at the VINE Transit Center (1151 Pearl St.), but they only serve the Amtrak Thruway connecting bus service. Wine country's only **Greyhound** (☎ 800/231-2222 or 707/545-6495; www.greyhound.com) terminal is at 3345 S. Santa Rosa Ave. in Santa Rosa and is open weekdays from 1:30 to 5pm and weekends and holidays from 2:30 to 5pm.

Getting **Around**

With hundreds of wineries scattered amid Napa and Sonoma's tens of thousands of acres of vineyards, it's difficult to explore wine country without wheels. See "Before You Go," above, for details about renting a car.

By Car

Driving in wine country is relatively straightforward and enjoyable. All the streets and highways are well-marked and most of them are strikingly beautiful, even when there's traffic. As you drive, keep in mind that one of the preeminent dangers of driving through wine country is that it's an area highly focused on alcohol consumption. The importance of avoiding drinking and driving can't be stressed strongly enough. Refrain from driving if you feel even a little tipsy (see "By Cab," below, in case you feel inebriated). Beware of others on the road who might have consumed too much in the tasting room.

The only other bungling factor is that some wine-country highways have many different names. For example, Hwy. 12 is also Hwy. 121 is also Carneros Highway is also Sonoma-Napa Highway. You'll see examples of this kind of multiple street-naming throughout wine country, and it may throw you off. If you get confused, pull over and look at a map (or ask your passenger to guide you). The best online resource for getting directions is Google Maps: www.google.com/maps.

By Cab

(No, not cabernet.) You have to call for a taxi in wine country unless you're boarding one from your hotel. Companies: **Napa Valley Cab** (☎ 707/257-6444); **Yellow Cab of Napa Valley** (☎ 707/226-3731); **Black Tie Taxi** (☎ 707/259-1000 or 888/544-8294); and **Wine Valley Taxi** (☎ 707/251-9463). In Sonoma, your best bet is **Vern's Taxi Service** (☎ 707/938-8885) and, in Northern Sonoma, **Healdsburg Taxi Cab** (☎ 707/433-7088). Rates hover at $2.85 for the first mile and $2.70 for each mile thereafter.

On Foot

Many of wine country's treasures within towns can be seen on foot, though you can't easily walk from town to town. See chapter 4 for the area's best walking tours. Though most of these tours traverse flat surfaces, wear comfortable shoes: You'll likely be standing for a long time, especially if you shop and visit tasting rooms.

Crossing Counties

The easiest way to get from Napa to Sonoma Valley and vice versa is through the Carneros District, which serves as the southern end of both valleys, and cross over along the Sonoma Highway (Calif. 12/121). To get from Napa to Sonoma takes about 20 minutes when there's no traffic. Another option: Take the Oakville Grade (also called Trinity Rd.) over the Mayacamas Range, which links Napa's Oakville to Sonoma's Glen Ellen. It's a steep and windy road, but it can be a time-saver if you're headed to the northern end of either valley. To get to northern Sonoma from points south in Sonoma Valley, follow Hwy. 12 north to get to Santa Rosa. From there, take U.S. 101 north and exit at the town of your choice. To get to northern Sonoma From downtown Napa, take California 12/121 (Sonoma Hwy.) to Hwy. 16 to Adobe Road (veer right) to U.S. 101 North. The trip is about an hour and 15 minutes. From northern Napa towns like Calistoga or St. Helena, it's easier to follow Hwy. 29 north past downtown Calistoga when it becomes Hwy. 128. Follow Hwy. 128 for a few blocks and turn left onto Petrified Forest Rd. Turn right onto Porter Creek Rd. and follow it; it becomes Mark West Springs Rd., which leads you to U.S. 101 N.

Getting Around in San Francisco

Driving in San Francisco can be frustrating. Along with aggressive local drivers, one-way streets, no left turn when you really need one, and dead ends, there's a severe lack of parking. Fortunately, it isn't necessary to drive to most places. You can call a cab (**Desoto Cab,** ☎ 415/970-1300; **Luxor Cabs,** ☎ 415/282-4141; **Pacific Cab,** ☎ 415/986-7220; **Veteran's Cab,** ☎ 415/641-3784; and **Yellow Cab,** ☎ 415/333-3333; rates are around $3.50 for the first fifth of a mile and 55¢ for each additional mile) or take **Muni,** a hodgepodge of county-managed transit systems that includes bus, streetcar, cable car, and subway. For detailed route information, call ☎ 311 or 415/701-2323 or go to www.sfmuni.com. Most routes run 6am to midnight, and some busy ones have late-night services (OWL). Websites that'll help navigate the complexities include **www.511.org**, which lists schedules and route maps for all Bay Area transit systems, and **www.nextbus.com**, which uses real-time GPS to track transit vehicles. Muni Passports can be a bargain for visitors who plan to take public transit often ($14 for 1 day, $22 for 3 days, $28 for 7 days, sold at Muni stations, SFO, and many local stores). **BART,** an acronym for **Bay Area Rapid Transit** (☎ 415/989-2278; www.bart.gov), is the subway that connects San Francisco with the East Bay (Oakland, Berkeley, Richmond, Concord, and Fremont). Fares range from $1.75 to $10.90, depending on how far you go. Machines in the stations dispense tickets, and computerized exits automatically deduct the correct fare. Children age 4 and younger ride free. Trains run every 15 to 20 minutes, Monday through Friday from 4am to midnight, Saturday from 6am to midnight, and Sunday from 8am to midnight. Seeing the city on foot, however, is a fantastic way to get around—but remember, the hills are steep.

Fast Facts

APARTMENT & VILLA RENTALS For short-term rentals, check **www.craigslist.org**. Click on the "apts/housing" link and put "Napa" into the search bar; you'll likely come up with at least 100 current listings. You'll likely negotiate a rental directly from the unit's owner (or the person subletting). Also check **www.airbnb.com**, **www.sublet.com**, **www.vrbo.com**, or **www.californiarental.com**. To research house exchanges, check out **Homelink International** (www.homelink.org), which lists more than 14,000 rentals in several countries, and **Homebase Holidays** (www.homebase-hols.com).

AREA CODE Napa and Sonoma counties both use **707.**

ATMs/CASHPOINTS There are ATMs throughout both valleys, though not as many as you'd find in a big city. Unless you go to your bank's ATM, you'll be charged a fee of $1.50 to $3. The **Cirrus** (☎ 800/424-7787; www.mastercard.com) and **PLUS** (☎ 800/843-7587; www.visa.com) networks span the globe; look at the back of your bank card to see which network you're on, then call or check online for ATM locations in wine country. Find out your daily withdrawal limit before you depart.

BABYSITTING Most hotel concierges will provide referrals to a babysitting service, which guests must then call on their own. Local companies supplying short-term sitters are **Nannies of the Valley** (☎ 707/251-8035), **Take A Break** (☎ 707/226-9188), and, a bit farther south, **Bay Area 2nd Mom, Inc.** (☎ 650/858-2469).

BANKS Most banks are open Monday through Friday from 9am to 5pm. Some are also open until midday Saturday. Many banks also have ATMs for 24-hour banking. **Bank of America** has several branches throughout the area, including one at 1001 Adams St. in St. Helena (☎ 707/963-4433). You'll also find **Wells Fargo** throughout the region, including a branch in Napa at 217 Soscol Ave., inside Raley's supermarket (☎ 707/254-8690). The Sonoma Wells Fargo is at 480 W. Napa St. (☎ 707/996-2360). For a complete listing of Wells Fargo branches, call ☎ 800/869-3557.

B&BS Reputable booking services include **Bed & Breakfast Inns Online** (☎ 800/215-7365; www.bbonline.com), **Pamela Lanier's Bed & Breakfasts** (www.lanierbb.com), **BedandBreakfast.com** (www.bedandbreakfast.com), **Stay Sonoma** (www.staysonoma.com; under "Lodging Type," choose "Bed & Breakfast"), and the **Napa Valley Destination Council** (www.legendarynapavalley.com; click on "Hotels," then "Lodging," and "Bed and Breakfasts" or "Inns"). To read the opinions of those who've stayed at a place you're considering, enter its name into the search bar at **TripAdvisor** (www.tripadvisor.com) or **Yelp** (www.yelp.com).

BIKE RENTALS One of the best companies is **Napa Valley Bike Tours** (☎ 707/944-2953 or 251-8687; www.napavalleybiketours.com). Daily rentals range from $39 to $65, depending on the type of bike. Kids' bikes are $25 per day, and tandems (synchronized fun) are $78. Napa Valley Bike Tours also provides excellent guided tours, ranging from the $99 classic tour to a $345 hot-air balloon and bike tour. Consider choosing a package that includes lunch—the company's gourmet picnics are fantastic. Other bike-rental companies include **Getaway Adventures** (Sonoma and Napa; ☎ 800/499-2453; www.getawayadventures.com) and **Wine Country Bike Rentals** (Sonoma; ☎ 866/922-4537 or 707/473-0610; www.winecountrybikes.com). Remember that sometimes B&Bs and even hotels will lend bikes for free, so ask if that's the case at your place before renting.

CAR RENTALS See "Before You Go," p 196.

CLIMATE See "Weather," p 196.

CONSULATES & EMBASSIES All embassies are located in the nation's capital, Washington, D.C. For a directory of embassies in Washington, D.C., call ☎ 202/512-1800 or go to www.state.gov/s/cpr/rls/dpl. Napa's nearest major city is San Francisco; the following are consulate addresses in San Francisco for a selection of countries: The **Australian Consulate-General** is at 575 Market St., Ste. 1800 (☎ 415/644-3620). The **Consulate General of Canada** is at 580 California St., 14th floor (☎ 415/834-3180). The **Consulate General of Ireland** is at 100 Pine St., Ste. 3350 (☎ 415/392-4214). The **British Consulate-General San Francisco** is at 1 Sansome St., Ste. 850 (☎ 415/617-1300). In Southern California is the **New Zealand Consulate-General of Los Angeles** at 2425 Olympic Blvd., Ste. 600E, Santa Monica (☎ 310/566-6555) though honorary consuls have been appointed to serve Sacramento (44733 N. El Macero Dr., El Macero; ☎ 530/756-8013) and San Francisco (☎ 650/342-4443).

CREDIT CARDS Credit cards are a safe way to "carry" money. With them, you can withdraw cash advances from ATMs using your PIN. Let your credit card company know of your travel plans so they don't freeze your account when you make your big wine purchases.

CUSTOMS Visitors arriving by air, no matter the port of entry, should cultivate patience and resignation before setting foot on U.S. soil. Getting through immigration can sometimes take a very long time, especially on summer weekends. People traveling by air from Canada and certain Caribbean countries can sometimes clear Customs and Immigration at the point of departure, which is much quicker.

DENTISTS If you have dental problems, a nationwide referral service known as **1-800-DENTIST** (☎ 800/336-8478) will provide the name of a nearby dentist or clinic.

DINING Dining in wine country, as in most of California, is generally casual. A jacket is rarely required, except at Napa's or Sonoma's most upscale restaurants. **Reservations:** Call the restaurant directly or try **OpenTable,** www.opentable.com, a free online reservations site.

DOCTORS See "Emergencies," below.

ELECTRICITY Like Canada, the United States uses 110 to120 volts AC (60 cycles), compared to 220 to 240 volts AC (50 cycles) in most of Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. If your small appliances use 220 to 240 volts, you'll need a 110-volt transformer and a plug adapter with two flat parallel pins to operate them here. Downward converters that change 220 to 240 volts to 110 to 120 volts are difficult to find in the U.S., so bring one with you.

EMERGENCIES Dial ☎ **911** for fire, police, and ambulance. No coins are needed from a working public phone. The **Poison Control Center** can be reached at ☎ 800/222-1222 toll-free. If you encounter serious problems, contact **Traveler's Aid International** (☎ 202/546-1127; www.travelersaid.org).

FAMILY TRAVEL See gocitykids.parentsconnect.com, familyfun.go.com, or www.sanfrancisco.travel for good ideas.

GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELERS See www.sanfrancisco.travel/lgbt or www.gaytravel.com for good ideas.

HOLIDAYS Banks, government offices, post offices, and many stores, restaurants, and museums are closed on the following national holidays: January 1 (New Year's Day), the third Monday in January (Martin Luther King, Jr., Day), the third Monday in February (Presidents' Day), the last Monday in May (Memorial Day), July 4 (Independence Day), the first Monday in September (Labor Day), the second Monday in October (Columbus Day), November 11 (Veterans Day), the fourth Thursday in November (Thanksgiving), and December 25 (Christmas). Also, the Tuesday following the first Monday in November is Election Day and is a federal government holiday held every 4 years (next in 2016).

INSURANCE **Trip-Cancellation Insurance:** This helps you get your money back if you have to back out of a trip, go home early, or if your travel supplier goes bankrupt. Allowed reasons for cancellation can range from sickness to natural disasters to the State Department declaring your destination unsafe for travel. (Insurers usually won't cover vague fears, though, as many travelers discovered when they tried to cancel their Oct 2001 trips after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.) Trip-cancellation insurance might be a good buy if you're getting tickets well in advance—who knows what the state of the world, or of your airline, will be in 9 months. Policy details vary, so read the fine print—and make sure that your provider is on the list of carriers covered in case of bankruptcy. For information, contact one of the following insurers: **Allianz Global Assistance** (☎ 800/284-8300; www.allianztravelinsurance.com), **Travel Guard International** (☎ 800/826-4919; www.travelguard.com), **Travel Insured International** (☎ 800/243-3174; www.travelinsured.com), or **Travelex Insurance Services** (☎ 800/228-9792; www.travelexinsurance.com).

Medical Insurance: Insurance policies can cover everything from baggage loss or theft to trip cancellation to the guarantee of bail in case you're arrested. Good policies will also cover the costs of an accident, repatriation, or death. Packages such as Europ Assistance's Worldwide Healthcare Plan are sold by European automobile clubs and travel agencies at attractive rates. **Worldwide Assistance Services, Inc.** (☎ 240/330-1000; www.worldwideassistance.com) is the U.S. agent for Europ Assistance. Though it's not required of travelers, health insurance is highly recommended. Unlike many European countries, the U.S. does not offer free or low-cost medical care to its citizens or visitors. Doctors and hospitals are expensive, and in most cases will require advance payment or proof of coverage before rendering services. Though lack of health insurance may prevent you from being admitted to a hospital in nonemergencies, don't worry about being left injured or ill; the American way is to fix you now and bill you later. **For British Travelers:** Most big travel agents offer their own insurance and will probably try to sell you their package when you book a holiday. Think before you sign. The Consumers' Association recommends that you insist on seeing the policy and reading the fine print before buying travel insurance. The **Association of British Insurers** (☎ 020/7600-3333; www.abi.org.uk) gives advice by phone and publishes *Holiday Insurance,* a free guide to policy provisions and prices. You might also shop around for better deals. **For Canadian Travelers:** Canadians should check with their provincial health plan offices or call **Health Canada** (☎ 613/957-2991; www.hc-sc.gc.ca) to find out the extent of your coverage and what documentation and receipts you must take home in case you are treated in the U.S. **For Australian Travelers: Online Travel Insurance** (☎ 07/5450-5654; www.travelinsuranceaustralia.com.au) offers a variety of policies for U.S. travel.

Lost-Luggage Insurance: On domestic flights, checked baggage is covered up to $2,500 per ticketed passenger. On international flights (including U.S. portions of international trips), baggage is limited to approximately $9 per pound, up to about $635 per checked bag. If you plan to check items more valuable than the standard liability, see if they're covered by your homeowner's policy, get baggage insurance as part of your travel-insurance package, or buy Travel Guard's "BagTrak" product. Don't buy insurance at the airport, as it's usually overpriced. Strongly consider packing valuables or irreplaceable things in your carry-on luggage, since many items (including books, money, and electronics) aren't covered by airline policies. If your luggage is lost, immediately file a lost-luggage claim at the airport, detailing your suitcase's contents. For most airlines, you must report delayed, damaged, or lost baggage within 4 hours of arrival. Airlines are required to deliver luggage, once found, directly to your hotel or house free of charge.

INTERNET ACCESS Internet cafes aren't too prevalent in wine country, but many coffee shops are also Wi-Fi hotspots. In Napa, try Whole Foods (3682 Bel Aire Plaza; ☎ 707/224-6300), Starbucks at 1340 Trancas St. (☎ 707/253-8552), or Ritual Coffee Roasters in the Oxbow Public Market (610 1st St.; ☎ 707/253-1190). In Sonoma, Wi-Fi is available at Sonoma State Historic Park (363 3rd St. W.; ☎ 707/938-9560; www.parks.ca.gov); Whole Foods (201 W. Napa St.; ☎ 707/938-8500); and at Barking Dog Coffee Roasters (18133 Sonoma Hwy.; ☎ 707/939-1905 & 201 W. Napa

St.; ☎ 707/996-7446). Ask if your hotel provides Internet access, Wi-Fi, or a business center, and how much it costs. Note that wireless access fees vary and free access may be limited.

LIMOUSINE SERVICES There are many companies chomping at the bit to chauffer your wine tasting in style. Among the best: **Pure Luxury** (4246 Petaluma Blvd. N., Petaluma; ☎ 800/626-5466; www.pureluxury.com), **Beau Wine Tours and Limousine Service** (21707 8th St. E., Sonoma; ☎ 800/387-2328; www.beauwinetours.com), and **Celebrity Limousine** (☎ 707/552-7752; www.celeblimo.com). **Antique Tour Limousines** is unique in that its vehicles are vintage convertible Packards with updated wraparound seating. Rates start around $120 per hour.

LIQUOR LAWS Liquor and grocery stores, as well as some drugstores, are permitted to sell packaged alcoholic beverages between 6am and 2am. Most restaurants, nightclubs, and bars are licensed to serve alcoholic beverages during the same hours. The legal age for purchase and consumption is 21, and proof of age is required.

MONEY **Traveler's checks:** You can get traveler's checks at almost any bank. American Express offers denominations of $20, $50, $100, $500, and, for cardholders, $1,000. You'll pay a service charge ranging from 1% to 4%. You can also get American Express traveler's checks by phone (☎ 800/221-7282; 0870/600-1060 in the U.K.; Amex gold and platinum cardholders who use this phone number are exempt from the 1% fee). Australians can go to www.americanexpress.com.au. **American Automobile Association (AAA)** members can obtain checks without a fee at most AAA branches. Outside the U.S., contact your bank, which will be able to advise you on buying U.S. traveler's checks. If you choose to carry traveler's checks, keep a record of their serial numbers in the event that they're lost or stolen. You'll get a refund faster if you know the numbers. **Credit Cards:** See "Credit Cards," p 203.

PASSES The **Wine Country Explorer Pass** (available at www.kijubi.com), presented by Smart Destinations (☎ 800/887-9103; www.smartdestinations.com), is an excellent deal. For $49, the pass includes 2 days of prepaid admission to a number of Napa and Sonoma wineries and cultural attractions—which would cost $118 if each was purchased separately—plus some shopping savings.

PHARMACIES **Rite Aid,** a drugstore and convenience chain, has stores just about everywhere. Call ☎ 800/748-3243 or go to www.riteaid.com for the address and phone number of the nearest store.

SAFETY Don't walk alone at night, stay in well-lighted areas, and carry a minimum of cash and jewels. Though wine country isn't crime-ridden by any means, it's not a 24-hour region. One of the dangers here is drunk driving—avoid it at all costs, and keep watch for other motorists who may have consumed too much wine.

SENIOR TRAVELERS Many wine-country attractions offer admission discounts for those 50 or older; ask if you're not sure. The **Council on Aging Services for Sonoma County Seniors** (730 Bennett Valley Rd., Santa Rosa; ☎ 707/525-0143; www.councilonaging.com) offers services such as entertainment, gentle exercise, arts and crafts, guest speakers, and current-event discussions. The council's special events for active seniors include nature walks, enrichment workshops, and a special event once a year (usually an art show or derby day in May).

Members of **AARP** (601 E St. NW, Washington, DC 20049; ☎ 888/687-2277; www.aarp.org) get discounts on hotels, airfares, and car rentals. Seniors looking to travel with a similarly aged group should visit **Road Scholar**'s website, www.roadscholar.com (enter "Napa" or "Sonoma" into the search bar; ☎ 800/454-5768). U.K. seniors can contact **Saga** (☎ 0800/096-0074 or 0800/015-8055; www.saga.co.uk) for a range of products and services, including holidays and insurance. Australians 50 and older should contact the **National Seniors Association** (☎ 1300/76-5050; www.nationalseniors.com.au).

SMOKING California has pretty restrictive smoking laws. They prohibit smoking in public buildings (and within 20 ft. of them), restaurants and bars, as well as playgrounds and daycare facilities.

TAXES California state and local sales tax (9.25%) is added to all purchases except snack foods. The hotel tax, known as the transient occupancy tax, is 10% in Sonoma County and 12% in Napa County. You won't have to pay sales tax if you have your purchases shipped directly out of state.

TAXIS See "Getting Around," earlier in this chapter.

TELEPHONES For directory assistance, dial ☎ **411.** Pay phones (which are becoming hard to find) cost 35¢ to 50¢ for local calls, more for long-distance. See "Cellphones (Mobiles)," earlier in this chapter.

TIME California is in the Pacific Standard time zone: 8 hours behind Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) or 7 hours behind during daylight saving time (Mar–Nov); 3 hours behind Eastern Standard Time (EST).

TIPPING In hotels, tip bellhops at least $1 per bag and the housekeeping staff $2 to $3 per day (more if you've left a mess); the doorman or concierge $1 to $5 only if he or she has provided you with some specific service (for example, calling a cab or obtaining hard-to-get tickets). Tip the valet-parking attendant at least $1 each time your car is retrieved. In restaurants, bars, and nightclubs, waitstaff expect 15% to 20% of the check, bartenders 10% to 15%, checkroom attendants $1 per garment, and valet-parking attendants at least $1 per vehicle. Tip cabdrivers 15%, skycaps at airports at least $1 per bag, and hairdressers and barbers 15% to 20%.

TOILETS Public toilets can be hard to find in wine country. Hotels and restaurants are probably the best bets for clean facilities, and they're usually friendly about letting stoppers-by use them.

TOURIST INFORMATION See "Tourist Offices," p 196.

TRAVELERS WITH DISABILITIES Many travel agencies offer customized tours and itineraries for travelers with disabilities. Two of them are **Flying Wheels Travel** (☎ 507/451-5005; www.flyingwheelstravel.com) and **Accessible Journeys** (☎ 800/846-4537; www.disabilitytravel.com). From the U.K., **Access Travel** (☎ 01942/888844; www.access-travel.co.uk) offers a variety of holidays for persons with disabilities.

Wine Country: A Brief History

1542 Wappo Indians inhabit Napa Valley; Portuguese explorer Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo sails up the California coast, the first European to investigate the region.

1780 Franciscan missionaries, establishing the first of what would become the state's 21 missions, plant California's first vineyard near San Diego.

1821 Mexico wins independence from Spain and annexes California.

1824 The *padres* of the 21st mission, San Francisco Solano, plant vines near present-day Sonoma.

1825 California's first commercial vineyards are established in Los Angeles.

1825 George Calvert Yount establishes Napa's first homestead (now Yountville) and is the first to plant vineyards in Napa.

1840 California missions become secular and Mission San Francisco Solano's vines become the region's first commercial vineyard.

1846 The Bear Flag Revolt: Americans capture Sonoma, arresting and imprisoning resident Mexican governor Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo. The Americans declare an independent California Republic.

1846–48 The Mexican-American War rages between the U.S. and Mexico; Mexico loses about half its territory.

1850 Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo is elected to California's first State Senate.

1857 "Count" Agoston Haraszthy plants the first major vineyard of European varieties in Sonoma Valley.

1858 Sonoma's first commercial wines are produced when Charles Krug makes a few gallons for Napa pioneer John Patchett.

1861 Charles Krug goes on to establish Napa's first commercial winery.

1861 Schramsberg is founded.

1875 Sonoma supplants Los Angeles as the state's leading wine region (as measured by acreage).

1875 Beringer is founded.

1885 Napa ousts Sonoma as the state's leading wine region (as measured by acreage). Both valleys' wine industries continue to grow and prosper.

1889 Sonoma has 100 wineries; Napa has more than 140.

1890S Napa loses roughly 75% of its acreage to a plant louse *(phylloxera vastatrix)* epidemic that attacks vineyards.

1919 The 18th Amendment is enacted: "The manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors ... is hereby prohibited." President Woodrow Wilson vetoes the accompanying Volstead Act, but the amendment is made anyway.

1920 Prohibition begins and is enforced. Most of California's wineries shut down, though a few keep operating to produce sacramental and medicinal wine.

1933 The 18th Amendment is repealed by the 21st Amendment, making it the Constitution's only provision to be explicitly modified.

1934 Americans pay almost no attention to dry European-style table wines; the bulk of domestically consumed wines are ports and sherries. This lack of interest persists for 35 years.

1937 Napa has only 37 wineries; Sonoma has 91.

1944 Napa Valley Vintners Association is founded with the mission of promoting local wine worldwide.

1960 Napa dwindles to 25 wineries; Sonoma has even fewer (just 9, by one account).

1960 Robert Mondavi leaves Charles Krug winery to start his own. He develops new winemaking techniques and aggressive marketing strategies.

1972 Wineries start burgeoning again in Napa: This year and next, big players appear on the scene, including Chateau Montelena, Stag's Leap Wine Cellars, Clos du Val, Franciscan, Trefethen, Joseph Phelps, and Domaine Chandon. In Sonoma, Kenwood, Chateau St. Jean, and St. Francis open.

1976 At a blind tasting in Paris, French wine experts unwittingly award top honors to Chateau Montelena's chardonnay and Stag's Leap Wine Cellars' cabernet, shocking France and waking the world up to California wines.

EARLY 1980S Vintners in both valleys discover *phylloxera vastatrix* again, requiring replanting of most of their acreage. Wine sales level off.

1981 The first annual Auction Napa Valley takes place, starting a tradition that has raised more than $60 million for charity and helped establish Napa as a prestigious region capable of drawing considerable wealth.

1981 Sonoma Valley is designated an American Viticulture Area (AVA).

1982 Napa Valley is designated an AVA. Since then, more than a dozen other AVAs have been defined.

1990 Replanting continues and new labels steadily emerge. Restyled red wines become particularly popular.

1992 Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance is formed to promote Sonoma wines and grapes.

2012 Napa Valley boasts more than 400 wineries; Sonoma has more than 300.

A Quick Guide to Wine Varietals

Major Grape Varietals

Below is a list of some of California wine country's most prevalent grape types.

Cabernet sauvignon This transplant from Bordeaux has become California's best-known varietal. The small, deep-colored, thick-skinned berry is a complex grape, yielding medium- to full-bodied red wines that are highly tannic when young and usually require a long aging period to achieve their greatest potential. Cabernet is often blended with other related red varietals, such as merlot and cabernet franc (see below), into full-flavored red table wines. These blends, if sanctioned by the Meritage Association, are often called Meritage wines. Cabernet is often matched with red-meat dishes and strong cheeses. If you're looking to invest in several cases of wine, cabernet sauvignon is always a good long-term bet.

Chardonnay The most widely planted grape variety in wine country produces exceptional medium- to full-bodied dry white wines. In fact, it was a California chardonnay that revolutionized the world of wine when it won the legendary 1976 Paris tasting test. You'll find a range of chardonnays in wine country, from delicate, crisp wines that are clear and light in color to buttery, fruity, and oaky (no other wine benefits more from the oak aging process) wines that tend to have deeper golden hues as they increase in richness. This highly complex and aromatic grape is one of the few that doesn't require blending; it's also the principal grape for making sparkling wine. Chardonnay goes well with a variety of dishes, including seafood, poultry, pork, veal, and pastas made with cream or butter.

Merlot Traditionally used as a blending wine to smooth out other grapes' rough edges, merlot has gained popularity in California since the early 1970s—enough so that wineries such as Sonoma's St. Francis are best known for producing masterful merlots. Though it got a bad rap in the 2004 film *Sideways,* it's still America's most popular red (at least by sales figures). The merlot grape is a relative of cabernet sauvignon, but it's fruitier and softer, with a pleasant black-cherry bouquet. Merlots tend to be simpler and less tannic than most cabernets, and they're drinkable at an earlier age, though these wines, too, gain complexity with age. Serve this medium- to full-bodied red with any dish you'd normally pair with a cabernet—it's great with pizza.

Pinot noir It took California vintners decades to make relatively few great wines from pinot noir grapes, which are difficult to grow and vinify. Even in their native Burgundy, the wines are excellent only a few years out of every decade. Recent attempts to grow the finicky grape in the Carneros District's cooler climes have shown promising results. During banner harvest years, California's pinot grapes produce complex, light- to medium-bodied red wines with such low tannins and silky textures that they're comparable to the world's finest reds. Pinots are fuller and softer than cabernets and can be drinkable at 2 to 5 years of age, though the best improve with additional aging. Pinot noir is versatile at the dinner table but goes best with lamb, duck, turkey, game birds, semisoft cheeses, even fish.

Riesling Also called Johannisberg Riesling or white Riesling, this is the grape from which most of Germany's great wines are produced. It was introduced to California in the mid–19th century by immigrant vintners and is now used mainly to make floral and fruity white wines of light to medium body, ranging from dry to very sweet. It's also often used to make late-harvest dessert wine. Well-made Rieslings, of which California has produced few, have a vivid fruitiness and lively balancing acidity, as well as the potential to age for many years. Suggested food pairings include crab, pork, sweet-and-sour foods, Asian cuisine, and anything with a strong citrus flavor.

Sauvignon blanc Also labeled as fumé blanc, these grapes are used to make crisp, dry whites of medium to light body that vary in flavor from slightly grassy to tart or fruity. The grape grows well in Napa and Sonoma and has grown in popularity due to its distinctive character and pleasant acidity, recently becoming a contender to the almighty chardonnay. Because of their acidity, sauvignon blancs pair well with shellfish, seafood, and salads.

Zinfandel Often called the "mystery" grape because its origins are uncertain, zinfandel first appeared on California labels in the late 1800s. So it's come to be known as California's grape, and in fact, most of the world's zinfandel acreage is in northern California: Some of the best zin grapes grow in cool coastal locations and on century-old vines in California's more eastern Gold Country. Zinfandel is by far wine country's most versatile grape, popular as blush wine (the ever-quaffable white zinfandel: a light, fruity wine usually served chilled); as dark, spicy, and fruity red wines; even as a port. Premium zins, like those crafted by Sonoma's Ravenswood Winery (see p 157), are rich and peppery with a lush texture and nuances of raspberries, licorice, and spice. Food-wise, it's a free-for-all, though premium zins go well with beef, lamb, hearty pastas, pizza, and stews.

Lesser Known Grape Varietals

Cabernet franc A French black grape that's often blended with—and overshadowed by—the more widely planted cabernet sauvignon, cabernet franc was recently discovered to be one of the grape species that gave rise to cabernet sauvignon. The grape grows best in cool, damp conditions and tends to be lighter in color and tannins than its sauvignon cousin, so it matures earlier in the bottle. These wines have a deep purple color with a herbaceous aroma.

Chenin blanc Planted mainly in France, chenin blanc runs the gamut from cheap, dry whites with little discernible character to some of the world's most subtle, fragrant, and complex wines. In wine country, the grape is mostly used to create fruity, light- to medium-bodied and slightly sweet wines. Chenin blanc lags far behind chardonnay and sauvignon blanc in popularity, though in good years, it develops a lovely and complex bouquet, especially when aged in oak. It's often served with pork and poultry, Asian dishes with soy-based sauces, mild cheeses, and vegetable and fruit salads.

Gewürztraminer This grape (pronounce the "w" like a "v") produces whites' strong floral aromas and lychee-nut-like flavor. Slightly sweet yet spicy, it's somewhat similar in style to the Johannisberg Riesling and is occasionally used to make late-harvest, dessert-style wine. The grape grows well in California's cooler coastal regions, especially in Mendocino County to the north. The varietal is appreciated for its capability to complement Asian foods: Its sweet character stands up to flavors that would diminish a drier wine's nuances.

Petite sirah Widely grown throughout California's warmer regions, petite sirah's origins are a mystery. The grape, which produces rich, high-tannin reds, serves mainly as the backbone for Central Valley "jug" wines. Very old vines still exist in cooler northern regions, where these grapes are made into robust, well-balanced reds.

Pinot blanc A mutation of pinot gris, the pinot blanc grape is prevalent in France's Alsace region, where it makes for dry, crisp white wines. In California, pinot blanc produces a fruity wine similar to chardonnay's simpler versions. It's also blended with champagne-style sparkling wines, thanks to its acid content and clean flavor.

Sangiovese This is Italy's favorite grape: It makes everything from chianti and Brunello di Montalcino to "Super Tuscan" blends. Now it's also making a name for itself in California. Its style varies depending on where it's grown, but it's commonly described as anything from "fruity," "smooth," "spicy," "good acidity," and "medium-bodied" to "structured" and "full-bodied."

Syrah This red varietal is best known for producing France's noble and age-worthy Rhône Valley reds such as côte-rôtie and hermitage. Syrah vines produce dark, blackish berries with thick skins, resulting in typically dark, rich, dense, medium- to full-bodied wines with distinctive pepper, spice, and fruit flavors.

Index

See also Wineries index, below.

A

AAA (American Automobile Association), 206
AARP, 207
Acacia Vineyard (Napa), 134
Accessible Journeys, 207
Access Travel, 207
Accommodations, 116–130
  apartment and villa rentals, 202
  bed & breakfasts, 203
  Napa Valley, 118–125
  San Francisco, 178–181
  Sonoma Valley, 126–130
Acre Coffee (Petaluma), 100
Air travel, 199
Alcatraz Island, 169–170
Alderbrook (Healdsburg), 134–135
The Alembic (San Francisco), 191
Alexander Valley Vineyards (Healdsburg), 114, 135
Allianz Global Assistance, 204
Ambassador Toys (San Francisco), 191
American Automobile Association (AAA), 206
American Indian Trading Co. (Calistoga), 103–104
Amoeba (San Francisco), 189
Amtrak, 200
Andretti Winery (Napa), 135
A New Leaf Gallery (Sonoma), 44
Antique Fair (Yountville), 91
Antique Tour Limousines, 206
Apartment and villa rentals, 202
Apple Store (San Francisco), 188
Area code, 202
Arista Winery (Healdsburg), 114, 135
Armstrong Redwoods State Reserve, 4, 110
Arrowood Vineyards & Winery (Glen Ellen), 59, 136
Art and art galleries
  Calistoga, 104, 105
  Glen Ellen, 53
  Guerneville, 89
  Healdsburg, 85
  Napa, 12, 52
  Rutherford, 51
  St. Helena, 79, 80
  San Francisco, 188
  Sonoma, 44, 53, 75, 76
  tour of, 51–53
  Yountville, 51, 91
Artefact Design & Salvage (Sonoma), 44
Artesa Vineyards & Winery (Napa), 61, 136
Arts Guild of Sonoma, 53
The Association of British Insurers, 205
ATMs (automated teller machines), 202
Audelssa Estate Winery (Glen Ellen), 66, 95
Audelssa/Navillus Birney Winery & Vineyards (Glen Ellen), 136
Audubon Canyon Ranch (Glen Ellen), 3
Austin Creek State Recreation Area, 110

B

Babysitting, 202
Baldacci Family Vineyards (Napa), 136
Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park (St. Helena), 49
Ballooning, 18–19, 60–61, 197
Bank of America, 202
Banks, 202
Bardessono Inn & Spa (Yountville), 55
Barn Gallery (Sonoma), 44
Barrel Tasting Weekend (Sonoma Valley), 196
BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit), 202
Bartholomew Park Museum (Sonoma), 137
Bartholomew Park Winery (Sonoma), 58, 136–137
Basque Boulangerie (Sonoma), 75
Bay Area 2nd Mom, 202
Beach Blanket Babylon (San Francisco), 193
Beard Plaza (Yountville), 91
Bear Flag Monument (Sonoma), 74
Bear Flag Revolt, 3, 17, 45, 47
Beaulieu Vineyard (Rutherford), 137
Beau Wine Tours and Limousine Service (Sonoma), 61, 206
BedandBreakfast.com, 203
Bed & Breakfast Inns Online, 203
Bed & breakfasts (B&Bs), 203
BeeDriven, 62
Bella Vineyards (Healdsburg), 137–138
Bell Wine Cellars (Yountville), 91
Ben & Jerry's (Napa), 39
Benessere Vineyards (St. Helena), 138
Benziger Family Winery (Glen Ellen), 15, 39, 95–96, 138
Beringer Vineyards (St. Helena), 41, 138–139
Biking, 57, 108–109
  rentals, 203
Bikram Yoga Petaluma, 54
The Birds (film), 112
Bird-watching, 113, 114
Black Tie Taxi, 201
Blue Wing Inn (Sonoma), 76
Bodega Bay, 28, 112–113
The Boom Boom Room (San Francisco), 191
Bouchaine Vineyards (Napa), 139
Bouchon Bakery (Yountville), 91
Boudin Bakery (San Francisco), 166
Bounty Hunter Rare Wine & Provisions (Napa), 70
Bourbon & Branch (San Francisco), 191
Brannan, Sam, 102
B.R. Cohn Winery (Glen Ellen), 45, 139
Bridge Haven, 28
Budget, 199
Budget-conscious travelers, 64–66
The Buena Vista (San Francisco), 191
Buena Vista Carneros (Sonoma), 23, 48, 58, 139–140
Bullfrog Pond, 111
Burbank Circle, 111
Business hours, 7
Bus travel, 200
Butter & Egg Days festival (Petaluma), 98

C

Cabernet franc, 211
Cabernet sauvignon, 209
Cable Car Museum and Powerhouse (San Francisco), 171
Cakebread Cellars (Rutherford), 140
California Academy of Sciences (San Francisco), 175

California cuisine, 185
California Palace of the Legion of Honor (San Francisco), 170
California Wine Tours, 61
Calistoga, 102–106
    restaurants, 105–106
    spas, 4, 103
    wineries, 141, 144, 145, 148, 159, 160
Calistoga Balloons, 18–19, 61
Calistoga Farmers' Market, 21
Calistoga Pottery, 103
Calistoga Roastery (Calistoga), 105
Calistoga Water, 102
Call Ranch House (Jenner), 28
Camp Schramsberg, 142
The Cannery (San Francisco), 166
Canoeing, 114
    Russian River, 4, 29
Canton Bazaar (San Francisco), 189
Carneros Center (Napa), 61
Carneros District, 201
Car rentals, 58, 199
Carriage House (Oakville), 62
Car travel, 199, 200–201
Cashpoints, 202
Castello di Amoroso (Calistoga), 140
Ca'toga Galleria d'Arte (Calistoga), 105
Cellhire, 199
Cellphones, 198–199
Chalk Hill Estate Vineyards and Winery (Healdsburg), 140
Chardonnay, 209
Charles Creek (Sonoma), 140–141
Charles Creek Vineyard Tasting Room & Gallery (Sonoma), 76
Charles Krug Winery-Peter Mondavi Family (St. Helena), 49, 141
Charles M. Schulz Museum (Santa Rosa), 4, 37
Chateau Montelena (Calistoga), 141
Chateau St. Jean (Kenwood), 15, 59, 142
Chelsea Antiques (Petaluma), 99
Chenin blanc, 211
Children, families with, 37–39
Chinatown (San Francisco), 167
Chocolate Cow (Sonoma), 35
Chronicle Books (San Francisco), 188
Cinco de Mayo Parade & Festival (Santa Rosa), 197
City Hall (Sonoma), 75
City Lights Booksellers & Publishers (San Francisco), 167, 188
Civic Center (San Francisco), 175
Cliff Lede Vineyards (Yountville), 51, 108–109, 142
Climate, 196
Cline Cellars (Sonoma), 16, 65–66, 143
Clos du Bois (Geyserville), 143
Clos du Val (Napa), 12, 109, 143–144
Clos Pegase (Calistoga), 51, 144
Coit Tower (San Francisco), 167
Colonel Armstrong Tree, 111
Conn Creek (St. Helena), 144
Consulates and embassies, 203
Cooking classes, 83
Copperfield's Books (Petaluma), 99
Coppola, Francis Ford, 13
Corison Winery (St. Helena), 144
Cornerstone Festival of Gardens (Sonoma), 44
Cosentino Winery (Yountville), 145
Coturri Winery (Glen Ellen), 145
The Council on Aging Services for Sonoma County Seniors (Santa Rosa), 206
Courthouse (Napa), 70–71
Craigslist.org, 202
Credit cards, 203
Crystal Geyser, 102
The Culinary Institute of America (St. Helena), 33
Customs regulations, 203
Cuvaison Winery (Calistoga), 145

D

Dalva (San Francisco), 191
Darioush (Napa), 145
Dean & Deluca (St. Helena), 34
De La Montanya Winery and Vineyards (Healdsburg), 145–146
Delilah's, 24
Della Maggiora, Steve, 99
DeLoach Vineyards (Santa Rosa), 146
Dennis Rae Fine Art (St. Helena), 79
Dentists, 204
Desoto Cab (San Francisco), 201
Dining, 204
    Calistoga, 105–106
    Glen Ellen, 96–97
    Guerneville, 89
    Healdsburg, 86–87
    Napa, 72–73
    Petaluma, 101
    St. Helena, 80–81
    San Francisco, 181–185
    Sonoma, 77
    Yountville, 92–93
Di Rosa Preserve (Napa), 3, 52
Disabilities, travelers with, 207
Discovery Trail, 111
Domaine Carneros (Napa), 61–62, 146
Domaine Chandon (Yountville), 12, 40, 90, 92, 109, 146
Downtown Bakery & Creamery (Healdsburg), 85
Drinking and driving, 7
Drugstores, 206
Dr. Wilkinson's Hot Springs Resort (Calistoga), 4, 103
Duckhorn Vineyards (St. Helena), 146–147
Duncan Cove, 28
Dutch Henry (Calistoga), 32
Dwight Murray Plaza (Napa), 68–69

E

East Ridge Trail, 111
Elbo Room (San Francisco), 191
Elderhostel, 207
Electricity, 204
Embarcadero Promenade (San Francisco), 174
Embassies, 203
Emergencies, 204
Enterprise, 199
Enterprise Rent-A-Car (Sonoma), 58
Evans Transportation, 199

F

Families with children, 37–39
Fango Mud bath powder, 105
Farmers' markets, 3, 21
Far Niente Winery (Oakville), 62
Fatted Calf (Napa), 65
Ferrari-Carano Vineyards and Winery (Healdsburg), 29, 147

Ferry Building (San Francisco), 173
Ferry Building Marketplace (San Francisco), 189–190
Ferry Plaza Farmers Market (San Francisco), 173
Festivals and special events, 196–198
The Fillmore (San Francisco), 193
Findings (St. Helena), 80
First Presbyterian Church (Napa), 71
First United Methodist Church (Napa), 71
Fisher, M. F. K., 66, 95, 136
Fisherman's Wharf (San Francisco), 165–166
Flight 001 (San Francisco), 191
Flora Springs Winery (St. Helena), 147–148
Fly Bar (San Francisco), 191
Flying Wheels Travel, 207
F-Market streetcar (San Francisco), 173
Food and drink. *See also* Restaurants
  for biking tour, 109
  California cuisine, 185
  picnics. *See* Picnic fare and spots
  tours for foodies, 32–35
Food For Humans (Guerneville), 89
Foppiano Vineyards (Healdsburg), 148
Fort Ross State Historic Park, 28, 113–114
49 Geary Street (San Francisco), 188
Fox Rent a Car, 199
Franciscan Oakville Estate (St. Helena), 148
Frank Family Vineyards (Calistoga), 41, 148
Freemark Abbey Winery (St. Helena), 148
Frog Hollow Farm (San Francisco), 174
Fuller Park (Napa), 71

G

Galleries
  Calistoga, 104, 105
  Glen Ellen, 53
  Guerneville, 89
  Healdsburg, 85
  Napa, 12, 52
  Rutherford, 51
  St. Helena, 79, 80
  San Francisco, 188
  Sonoma, 44, 53, 75, 76
  tour of, 51–53
  Yountville, 51, 91
Gallo of Sonoma (Healdsburg), 148–149
Garden Court (San Francisco), 174
Garden Valley Ranch (Petaluma), 43
Gary Farrell Vineyards & Winery (Healdsburg), 149
Gatehouse Gallery (Napa), 52
Gays and lesbians, 204
Getaway Adventures, 203
Gewürztraminer, 211
Geyser Peak Winery (Geyserville), 149
Geyserville, wineries, 143, 149, 161
Ghirardelli Soda Fountain & Chocolate Shop (San Francisco), 183
Ghirardelli Square (San Francisco), 166, 190
The Giant, 20
Giants Baseball (San Francisco), 194
Glen Ellen, 94–97
  restaurants, 96–97
  wineries, 138, 139, 145, 151
Glen Ellen Village Market, 16, 95
Gloria Ferrer Champagne Caves (Sonoma), 16–17, 149
Goat Rock Beach, 28, 113
Golden Gate Fortune Cookie Factory (San Francisco), 167, 190
Golden Gate Theater (San Francisco), 193
Good Vibrations (San Francisco), 189
Grace Cathedral (San Francisco), 171
Greens Sports Bar (San Francisco), 191
Green String Farm (Petaluma), 100
Greyhound, 200
Grgich Hills Cellar (Rutherford), 149–150
Guerneville, 28, 88–89, 114
  restaurants, 89
  winery, 153–154
Guerneville Farmers' Market, 21
Gundlach Bundschu Winery (Sonoma), 3, 16, 58, 150

H

Hagafen Cellars (Napa), 150
Hall Winery (St. Helena), 150
Hand Fan Museum (Healdsburg), 84
Harry Denton's Starlight Room (San Francisco), 181, 191–192
Harvest Fair (Sonoma County), 198
Harvest Moon Estate & Winery (Santa Rosa), 150
Hauck Cellars (Healdsburg), 85
Healdsburg, 27, 82–87
  restaurants, 86–87
  wineries in or near, 137, 140, 145, 147–149, 151–153, 157, 160
Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau, 196
Healdsburg Jazz Festival, 197
Healdsburg Museum, 27, 84
Healdsburg Taxi Cab, 201
Health and wellness, wine country for, 54–55
Health Canada, 205
Health insurance, 204–205
Hertz, 199
The Hess Collection (Napa), 12, 52, 150
Highway 1, 28
  along Sonoma Coast State Beach, 113
Hiking, 110–111
Historic Napa Mill, 71
History buffs, wine country for, 46–49
History of the wine country, 207–209
History Trail (St. Helena), 49
Holiday Autos, 199
Holidays, 204
Holy Assumption Monastery & Orthodox Religious Center (Calistoga), 104
Homebase Holidays, 202
Homelink International, 202
Honig Vineyard & Winery (Rutherford), 151
Hop Kiln Winery (Healdsburg), 27, 151
Hot-air ballooning, 18–19, 60–61, 197
Hotel Biron (San Francisco), 192
Hotels, 116–130
  apartment and villa rentals, 202
  bed & breakfasts, 203
  Napa Valley, 118–125
  San Francisco, 178–181
  Sonoma Valley, 126–130
Hotel St. Helena, 79
Hot springs, 4

Huntington Park (San Francisco), 171
Hurd Beeswax Candles (Calistoga), 105
Hyde Street Pier (San Francisco), 166

I

Icicle Tree, 111
Imagery Estate Winery & Art Gallery (Glen Ellen), 53, 151
Inglenook (Rutherford), 13, 151–152
Insurance, 204
Internet access, 205–206
InTouch USA, 198

J

Jack London State Historic Park, 48
Jack London Village (Glen Ellen), 96
Jan de Luz (St. Helena), 80
Jenner, 28
Johnson's Beach (Guerneville), 89
Jones, Lizzie Armstrong, 111
Jordan Vineyard & Winery (Healdsburg), 20, 152
Joseph Phelps Vineyards (St. Helena), 152
Joseph Swan Vineyards (Forestville), 152
Judd's Hill Micro-Crush, 142

K

Kayaking, 114
  Russian River, 4, 29
Kaz Vineyard & Winery (Kenwood), 152
Keating, John Michael, 3
Kendall-Jackson (Healdsburg), 83
Kendall-Jackson Wine Center (Fulton), 152–153
Kenwood, wineries in or near, 142, 152–154
Kenwood Vineyards, 66, 153
Kids, 37–39
Kinokuniya (San Francisco), 188
Kokomo Winery (Healdsburg), 153
Korbel Champagne Cellars (Guerneville), 27–28, 153–154
Kuleto Estate Family Vineyards (St. Helena), 62
Kunde Estate Winery & Vineyards (Kenwood), 154

L

Lachryma Montis (Sonoma), 47
La Crema (Healdsburg), 27, 83–84
Ladera Vineyards (Angwin), 154
La Haye Art Center (Sonoma), 53
Laszlo (San Francisco), 192
Ledson Winery & Vineyards (Kenwood), 59, 154
Lee Youngman Fine Art Gallery (Calistoga), 104
Limousine services, 61, 206
Lincoln Park (San Francisco), 170
Liquor laws, 206
Locals (Geyserville), 29
Lodging, 116–130
  apartment and villa rentals, 202
  bed & breakfasts, 203
  Napa Valley, 118–125
  San Francisco, 178–181
  Sonoma Valley, 126–130
Lombard Street (San Francisco), 165
London, Jack, 94, 95, 136
Long Meadow Ranch Winery & Farmstead (St. Helena), 33
Lost-luggage insurance, 205
Louis M. Martini Winery (St. Helena), 154–155
Luxor Cabs (San Francisco), 201

M

McCaulou's Department Store (Napa), 23, 69
McKinstry Street Depot (Napa), 63
Mad Dog in the Fog (San Francisco), 192
Maiden Lane (San Francisco), 188
Mario's Bohemian Cigar Store Café (San Francisco), 167
Maritime Museum (San Francisco), 166
Matrix Fillmore (San Francisco), 192
Medical insurance, 204–205
Merlot, 210
Military Antiques & Museum (Petaluma), 99
The Mint Karaoke Lounge (San Francisco), 192
Mission San Francisco Solano (Sonoma), 3, 75–76
Mitchell's Ice Cream (San Francisco), 184
Mobile phones, 198–199
Moby Dick (San Francisco), 192
Money matters, 206
Monticello Vineyards/Corley Family Napa Valley (Napa), 155
Moustache Baked Goods (Healdsburg), 83
Mud bath, 4
Mudd Henns (Calistoga), 105
Mumm Napa (Rutherford), 24–25, 51, 155
Muni (San Francisco), 201–202
Municipal Pier (San Francisco), 166

N

Nannies of the Valley, 202
Napa (town), 11, 68–73
  restaurants, 72–73
  wineries in or near, 134–139, 143, 145, 146, 150, 155–157, 160–162
Napa Downtown Farmers' Market, 21
Napa Firefighters Museum, 39, 70
Napa General Store, 11, 22
Napa River, 104
Napa's Chef's Market, 21
Napa Sonoma Wine Country Film Festival, 197–198
Napa Style (Yountville), 91
Napa Tourist Information Center, 23, 69
Napa Town Center, 11, 22–23, 69
Napa Valley, 6–7, 11–13
  accommodations, 118
  traveling to, 199–200
Napa Valley Aloft, 19, 60–61
Napa Valley Bike Tours, 109, 203
Napa Valley Cab, 62, 201
Napa Valley Coffee Roasting Co. (St. Helena), 70, 78
Napa Valley Destination Council, 196, 203
Napa Valley Museum, 3, 48
Napa Valley Mustard Festival, 198
Napa Valley Opera House, 69
Napa Valley Railroad Depot (Calistoga), 103
Napa Valley Wine Auction, 197

Napa Valley Wine Train, 63
National Seniors Association, 207
Nightlife, San Francisco, 191–194
Nob Hill (San Francisco), 171
Nondrinkers, wine country for, 43–45
Nordstrom (San Francisco), 188
North Beach (San Francisco), 167

O
Oak Hill Farm (Glen Ellen), 45
Oakland International Airport, 199
Oakville Grocery, 27, 34, 84
Oakville wineries, 155–158
Off season, 7
Old Faithful Geyser of California (Calistoga), 3–4, 19, 38
Olive oil, 32–34, 79
The Olive Press (Sonoma), 35
Olivier (St. Helena), 33, 78–79
Online Travel Insurance, 205
OpenTable, 204
Opus One (Oakville), 155
Orpheum Theater (San Francisco), 193
Osmosis Day Spa (Freestone), 55
Outdoor activities, 108–114
  biking, 108–109
  hiking, 110–111
Out of the Past (Guerneville), 88
Oxbow Public Market (Napa), 11, 35, 65, 68

P
Pacific Cab (San Francisco), 201
Palace of Fine Arts Theatre (San Francisco), 193
Pamela Lanier's Bed & Breakfasts, 203
Paradise Ridge Winery (Santa Rosa), 156
Paraduxx Winery (Napa), 156
Parson Jones Tree, 111
Patagonia (San Francisco), 188–189
Paul Hobbs Winery (Sebastopol), 156
Peju Province Winery (Rutherford), 156
Penry Park (Petaluma), 100
Petaluma, 98–101
  restaurants, 101
Petaluma Adobe house, 47
Petaluma Adobe State Historic Park, 46, 47
Petaluma Collective, 99
Petaluma Creamery Cheese Shop, 100
"Petaluma Heritage" mural (Petaluma), 99
Petaluma Historical Museum, 100
Petaluma Pie Company, 99
Petaluma Visitors Center, 98
Petite sirah, 211
Petrified Forest (Calistoga), 20, 37–38
Pharmacies, 206
Pica Pica (Napa), 65
Picnic fare and spots
  Alexander Valley, 114
  Calistoga, 38, 144, 145, 148
  Fulton, 153
  Geyserville, 143, 149
  Glen Ellen, 45, 48, 95, 151
  Guerneville, 89
  Healdsburg, 20, 27, 83–85, 114, 135, 151, 157, 160
  Kenwood, 15, 59, 142, 154
  Napa, 11, 12, 34, 68, 109, 143, 155
  Petaluma, 100
  Rutherford, 159
  Sebastopol, 160
  Sonoma, 3, 57, 58, 135, 139, 150, 159
  St. Helena, 148, 150, 158, 162
  Yountville, 92, 109
Piedmont (San Francisco), 189
Pied Piper Bar (San Francisco), 174
Pier 39 (San Francisco), 166
Pinot blanc, 211
Pinot noir, 210
Pioneer Cemetery (St. Helena), 49
Pioneer Trail, 110–111
Pit Tree, 20
Plaza Park (Healdsburg), 83
PlumpJack Winery (Oakville), 156–157
Poison Control Center, 204
Pool Ridge Trail, 111
Potter Schoolhouse (Bodega Bay), 112
Powell-Hyde Cable Car (San Francisco), 165
Powell's Sweet Shoppe (Healdsburg), 85
Press Club (San Francisco), 192
Preston Vineyards (Healdsburg), 157
Provenance Vineyards (Rutherford), 157
Pure Luxury Limousine (Petaluma), 61, 206

Q
Queen, The (Petrified Forest), 20

R
Rainbow Grocery (San Francisco), 190
Ranch Market Too (Yountville), 109
Ravenswood Winery (Sonoma), 57, 157
Raven Theater (Healdsburg), 87
Raymond Vineyards (St. Helena), 157
Red & White Fleet Bay Cruise (San Francisco), 170
Redwood Forest Theater, 111
Redwood Room (San Francisco), 192
Relish Culinary Adventures (Healdsburg), 35, 83
Restaurants, 204
  Calistoga, 105–106
  Glen Ellen, 96–97
  Guerneville, 89
  Healdsburg, 86–87
  Napa, 72–73
  Petaluma, 101
  St. Helena, 80–81
  San Francisco, 181–185
  Sonoma, 77
  Yountville, 92–93
Riesling, 210
Rio Lindo, beach at, 29
Rite Aid, 206
River House Books (St. Helena), 78
River Reader (Guerneville), 89
River Rock Casino (Geyserville), 21
River's Edge (Healdsburg), 29, 114
RN74 (San Francisco), 192
Robert Craig Wine Cellars (Napa), 157–158
Robert Mondavi Winery (Oakville), 12–13, 40–41, 158
Roche Winery Tasting Room (Sonoma), 76
Romantic wine country tour, 56–59
Round Pond Estate (Napa), 34
Route 12, 4
Ruby's Artist Cooperative (San Francisco), 189

Ruby Skye (San Francisco), 192
Russian Cemetery (Jenner), 28
Russian River, 29, 112–114
Russian River Art Gallery (Guerneville), 89
Russian River Wine Road, 198
Rutherford wineries, 140, 149, 151, 156, 157, 159

S

Safari West Wildlife Preserve (Santa Rosa), 24
Safety, 206
Saga, 207
St. Clement Vineyards (St. Helena), 158
St. Francis Winery & Vineyards (Santa Rosa), 158–159
St. Helena, 78–81
    restaurants, 80–81
    wineries, 138, 141, 144, 146–148, 150, 152, 154–155, 157, 158, 161, 162
St. Helena Olive Oil Co., 33, 79
St. Helena's Farmers' Market, 21
St. Helena Wine Center, 79
St. Supéry Winery (Rutherford), 39, 41, 159
San Andreas Fault, 113
San Francisco, 164–194
    accommodations, 178–181
    average monthly temperatures in, 197
    getting around in, 201
    nightlife, 191–194
    in one day, 165–167
    restaurants, 181–185
    shopping, 188–191
    in three days, 172–175
    in two days, 168–171
San Francisco Antique & Design Mall, 189
San Francisco 49ers (San Francisco), 194
San Francisco International Airport, 199
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA), 175
San Francisco Opera, 193
San Francisco Shopping Centre, 189
San Francisco Symphony, 193
Sangiovese, 211
Santa Rosa, wineries, 146, 150, 156, 158
Santa Rosa Convention & Visitors' Bureau, 196
Santa Rosa farmers' markets, 21
Sauvignon blanc, 210
Schramsberg Vineyards (Calistoga), 19, 159
Schug Carneros Estate Winery (Sonoma), 59, 159
Seasons, 196
Sebastiani Vineyards & Winery (Sonoma), 58, 159–160
Sebastopol Vineyards/Dutton Estate (Sebastopol), 160
Sebastopol wineries, 156, 160
Seconds First (Guerneville), 88–89
Seed Bank (Petaluma), 99
Semorile Building (Napa), 70
Senior travelers, 206–207
SFJAZZ Center (San Francisco), 193–194
Shafer Vineyards (Napa), 160
Sharpsteen, Ben, 104
Sharpsteen Museum (Calistoga), 104
Shipping wine, 8
SHN Curran Theatre (San Francisco), 193
Shuttles, 62
The Silverado Museum (St. Helena), 65
Silverado Trail, 3
Simi Winery (Healdsburg), 160
Smelling a wine, 8
Smoking, 207
Soko Hardware (San Francisco), 189
SoMa (South of Market) District (San Francisco), 174
Sonoma, 74–77
    restaurants, 77
    wineries in or near, 134–137, 139, 140, 143, 149, 150, 157, 159, 161, 162
Sonoma Barracks, 45, 76
Sonoma Cheese Factory, 45, 76
Sonoma Coast State Beach, 113
Sonoma County Airport Express, 199
Sonoma County Farm Trails, 35
Sonoma County Hot-Air Balloon Classic, 197
Sonoma County Tourism Bureau, 196
Sonoma-Enoteca, 75
Sonoma Market, 57
Sonoma Mission, 76
Sonoma Overlook Trail, 23
Sonoma Plaza, 17
Sonoma State Historic Park, 45, 47
Sonoma Valley, 6–7, 15–21
    accommodations, 126–130
    traveling to, 200
Sonoma Valley Bike Tours, 57
Sonoma Valley Film Festival, 196
Sonoma Valley Museum of Art (Sonoma), 53
Sonoma Valley Olive Season Finale Weekend, 198
Sonoma Valley Regional Park (Glen Ellen), 96
Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau, 196
Spas, 54, 55, 103
Special events and festivals, 196–198
Spectator sports, San Francisco, 194
Spice Islands Marketplace, 3, 33
Spring Hill Jersey Cheese, 100
Sterling Vineyards (Calistoga), 20, 38, 160–161
Steve Della Maggiora's (Petaluma), 99
Stevenson, Robert Louis, 19, 104
Stryker Sonoma (Geyserville), 161
Studio Barndiva (Healdsburg), 85
Sutter Home Winery (St. Helena), 64–65, 161
Swiss Hotel (Sonoma), 76
Syrah, 211

T

Take A Break, 202
Taste of Yountville, 198
Tasting rooms, 7. *See also specific wineries*
    Calistoga, 105
    Glen Ellen, 96
    Healdsburg, 83–85
    Napa Valley Wine Train, 63
    Sonoma, 76
    techniques for tasting wine, 30
Taxes, 207
Taxis, 7, 61, 201
Teatro Zinzanni (San Francisco), 194
Telephones, 207
Temperatures, average seasonal, 197
Terra Firma (Sonoma), 75

Thumbprint Cellars (Healdsburg), 83
Tiddle E. Winks Vintage 5 & Dime (Sonoma), 75
Time zone, 207
Tin Barn Vineyards (Sonoma), 161
Tipping, 207
Toad Hollow Vineyards (Healdsburg), 27, 83
Toilets, public, 207
The Tonga Room & Hurricane Bar (San Francisco), 192–193
The Top of the Mark (San Francisco), 180, 193
Tosca (San Francisco), 193
Tourist offices, 196
Traffic, 7
Train Town (Sonoma), 38–39
Train travel, 200
Traveler's Aid, 204
Traveler's checks, 206
Travelex Insurance Services, 204
Travel Guard International, 204
Travel insurance, 205
Travel Insured International, 204
Trefethen Vineyards (Napa), 161–162
TripAdvisor, 203
Trip-cancellation insurance, 204
Triptel Mobile Rental Phones (San Francisco), 198
Tuttimelon (San Francisco), 167
Twin Hill Ranch (Sebastopol), 43

U

Union Square (San Francisco), 165
Up the River (Guerneville), 89
Uva Trattoria (Napa), 53

V

Vallejo, Gen. Mariano Guadalupe, 45–47, 74, 76, 99
Valley of the Moon Certified Farmers' Market (Sonoma), 21
Valley Wine Shack (Sonoma), 75
Vella Cheese Co. (Sonoma), 75
Vermeil Wines (Calistoga), 105
Vern's Taxi Service, 201
Vesuvio (San Francisco), 193
Veteran's Cab (San Francisco), 201
Veterans Home of California (Yountville), 48–49
Veterans Memorial Park (Napa), 70
Viader Vineyards and Winery (Deer Park), 162
Viansa Winery (Sonoma), 162
Victorian Park (San Francisco), 166
Vin Couture Lounge (Healdsburg), 85
Vineyard Discovery Center (Glen Ellen), 138
Vineyard to Vintner (V2V), 197
Vintage Festival (Sonoma), 198
Vintage Home (St. Helena), 80
Vintner's Collective (Napa), 70
Vintners Inn (Santa Rosa), 198
Visitor information, 196
Viva Cocolat (Petaluma), 100
V Marketplace (Yountville), 91
V. Sattui Winery (St. Helena), 64, 162

W

Washington Square Park (San Francisco), 167
Weather, 196
Websites, useful, 198
Wells Fargo, 202–203
Whale Point, 113
Wi-Fi access, 205–206
Wildflowers, 3
Wilkes Bashford (San Francisco), 189
Windsor Vineyards (Healdsburg), 85
Wine Club San Francisco, 190
Wine Country Bike Rentals, 203
Wine Country Chocolates (Glen Ellen), 96
The Wine Country Explorer Pass, 206
Wineries, 131–162
    Calistoga, 141, 144, 145, 148, 159, 160
    getting to know, 8
    Geyserville, 143, 149, 161
    Glen Ellen, 138, 139, 145, 151
    Guerneville, 153–154
    Healdsburg, 137, 140, 145, 147–149, 151–153, 157, 160
    Kenwood, 142, 152–154
    learning to make your own wine, 142
    Napa, 134–139, 143, 145, 146, 150, 155–157, 160–162
    Oakville, 155–158
    Rutherford, 140, 149, 151, 156, 157, 159
    St. Helena, 138, 141, 144, 146–148, 150, 152, 154–155, 157, 158, 161, 162
    Santa Rosa, 146, 150, 156, 158
    Sebastopol, 156, 160
    Sonoma, 134–137, 139, 140, 143, 149, 150, 157, 159, 161, 162
    special events and festivals, 196–198
    Yountville, 142, 145
Wine tasting and tasting rooms, 7. *See also specific wineries*
    Calistoga, 105
    Glen Ellen, 96
    Healdsburg, 83–85
    Napa Valley Wine Train, 63
    Sonoma, 76
    techniques for tasting wine, 30
Wine Valley Taxi, 201
Wine varietals, 209–211
Wings Over Wine Country (Santa Rosa), 197
Winter Wineland (Healdsburg), 198
Wolk gallery (St. Helena), 80
Woodhouse Chocolate (St. Helena), 33, 79
Worldwide Assistance Services, 205

Y

Yellow Cab (San Francisco), 201
Yellow Cab of Napa Valley, 201
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (San Francisco), 174–175
Yountville, 90–93
    restaurants, 92–93
    wineries, 142, 145
Yountville Chamber of Commerce, 196
Yountville's Farmers' Market, 21

Z

ZD Wines (Napa), 162
Zinfandel, 210

Wineries

Alderbrook (Sonoma), 134–135
Alexander Valley Vineyards (Sonoma), 135
Andretti Winery (Napa), 135
Arista Winery (Sonoma), 135
Arrowood Vineyards & Winery (Sonoma), 136
Artesa Vineyards & Winery (Napa), 136
Audelssa/Navillus Birney Winery & Vineyards (Sonoma), 136
Baldacci Family Vineyards (Napa), 136–137
Beaulieu Vineyard (Napa), 137
Bella Vineyards (Healdsburg), 137–138
Benessere Vineyards (Napa), 138
Benziger Family Winery (Glen Ellen), 138
Beringer Vineyards (St. Helena), 138–139
Bouchaine Vineyards (Napa), 139
B.R. Cohn Winery (Glen Ellen), 139
Buena Vista Carneros (Sonoma), 139–140
Cakebread Cellars (Rutherford), 140
Castello di Amoroso (Calistoga), 140
Chalk Hill Estate Vineyards and Winery (Healdsburg), 140
Charles Creek (Sonoma), 140–141
Charles Krug Winery-Peter Mondavi Family (St. Helena), 141
Chateau Montelena (Calistoga), 141
Chateau St. Jean (Kenwood), 142
Cliff Lede Vineyards (Yountville), 142
Cline Cellars (Sonoma), 143
Clos du Bois (Geyserville), 143
Clos du Val (Napa), 143
Clos Pegase (Calistoga), 144
Conn Creek (St. Helena), 144
Corison Winery (St. Helena), 144
Cosentino Winery (Yountville), 145
Coturri Winery (Glen Ellen), 145–146
Cuvaison Winery (Calistoga), 145
Darioush (Napa), 145
De La Montanya Winery and Vineyards (Healdsburg), 145
DeLoach Vineyards (Santa Rosa), 146
Domaine Carneros (Napa), 146
Domaine Chandon (Yountville), 146
Duckhorn Vineyards (St. Helena), 146–147
Ferrari-Carano Vineyards and Winery (Healdsburg), 147
Flora Springs Winery (St. Helena), 147–148
Foppiano Vineyards (St. Helena), 148
Franciscan Oakville Estate (St. Helena), 148
Frank Family Vineyards (Calistoga), 148
Freemark Abbey Winery (St. Helena), 148
Gallo of Sonoma (Healdsburg), 148–149
Gary Farrell Vineyards & Winery (Healdsburg), 149
Geyser Peak Winery (Geyserville), 149
Gloria Ferrer Champagne Caves (Sonoma), 149
Grgich Hills Cellar (Rutherford), 149
Gundlach Bundschu Winery (Sonoma), 150
Hagafen Cellars (Napa), 150
Hall Winery (St. Helena), 150
Harvest Moon Estate & Winery (Santa Rosa), 150
The Hess Collection Winery (Napa), 150–151
Honig Vineyard & Winery (Rutherford), 151
Hop Kiln Winery (Healdsburg), 151
Imagery Estate Winery & Art Gallery (Glen Ellen), 151
Inglenook (Rutherford), 151–152
Jordan Vineyard & Winery (Healdsburg), 152
Joseph Phelps Vineyards (St. Helena), 152
Joseph Swan Vineyards (Forestville), 152
Kaz Vineyard & Winery (Kenwood), 152
Kendall-Jackson Wine Center (Fulton), 152–153
Kenwood Vineyards, 153
Kokomo Winery (Healdsburg), 153
Korbel Champagne Cellars (Guerneville), 153–154
Kunde Estate Winery & Vineyards (Kenwood), 154
Ladera Vineyards (Angwin), 154
Ledson Winery & Vineyards (Kenwood), 154
Louis M. Martini Winery (St. Helena), 154–155
Monticello Vineyards/Corley Family Napa Valley (Napa), 155
Mumm Napa, 155
Opus One (Oakville), 155
Paradise Ridge Winery (Santa Rosa), 156
Paraduxx Winery (Napa), 156
Paul Hobbs Winery (Sebastopol), 156
Peju Province Winery (Rutherford), 156
PlumpJack Winery (Oakville), 156–157
Preston Vineyards (Healdsburg), 157
Provenance Vineyards (Rutherford), 157
Ravenswood Winery (Sonoma), 157
Raymond Vineyards (St. Helena), 157
Robert Craig Wine Cellars (Napa), 157–158
Robert Mondavi Winery (Oakville), 158
St. Clement Vineyards (St. Helena), 158
St. Francis Winery & Vineyards (Santa Rosa), 158–159
St. Supéry Winery (Rutherford), 159
Schramsberg Vineyards (Calistoga), 159
Schug Carneros Estate Winery (Sonoma), 159
Sebastiani Vineyards & Winery (Sonoma), 159–160
Sebastopol Vineyards/Dutton Estate, 160
Shafer Vineyards (Napa), 160
Simi Winery (Healdsburg), 160
Sterling Vineyards (Calistoga), 160–161
Stryker Sonoma (Geyserville), 161
Sutter Home Winery (St. Helena), 161
Tin Barn Vineyards (Sonoma), 161
Trefethen Vineyards (Napa), 161–162
Viader Vineyards and Winery (Deer Park), 162
Viansa Winery (Sonoma), 162
V. Sattui Winery (St. Helena), 162
ZD Wines (Napa), 162

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